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Fedalma

WORKS OF

GEORGE ELIOT

POEMS

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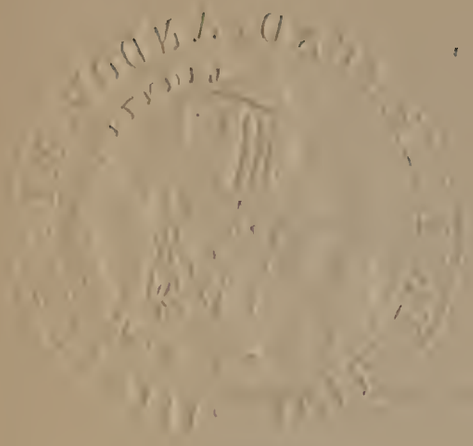

GEORGE ELIOT AS A POET

(*From the Contemporary Review, vol. viii, p.* 397)

AS if a strong, delightful water that we knew only as a river appeared in the character of a fountain; as if one whom we had wondered at as a good walker or inexhaustible pedestrian, began to dance; as if Mr. Bright, in the middle of a public meeting, were to oblige the company with a song, — no, no, not like that exactly, but like something quite new, — is the appearance of George Eliot in the character of a poet. "The Spanish Gypsy," a poem in five books, originally written, as a prefatory note informs us, in the winter of 1864–65, and, after a visit to Spain in 1867, re-written and amplified, is before us. It is a great volume of three hundred and fifty octavo pages; and the first thing which strikes the reader is, that it is a good deal longer than he expected it would be. This is bad, to begin with. What right has anybody to make a poem longer than one expected? The next thing that strikes one is, — at all events, the next thing that struck me was, as I very hastily turned over the book, — that the fine *largo* of the author's manner, continued through so many pages, was a very little burdensome in its effect. That may come of the specific levity of my taste; but it is as well to be quite frank.

Dr. Holmes, of Boston, says — I fear I am repeating myself, as he did with his illustration of the alighting huma — that a poem is like a violin

in the respect that it needs to be kept and used a good deal before you know what music there is in it. If that is so, what may here be said of George Eliot's poem will have but little value; for the book has only been in my hand a few days, at a time when my preoccupation is great, and reading is painful to me. But, in the first place, I do really think my hasty impressions are correct in this case; and, in the second, I shall find some way of returning to the book, if after very often-repeated readings (according to my habit) I alter any of my opinions.

In the *Argosy* I once gave reasons for looking forward with deep interest to anything George Eliot might do in the shape of poetry, and also hinted the direction in which her risk of greater or less failure appeared to me to lie. "You can never reckon up these high-strung natures, ever ready to be re-impregnated," or tell what surprises they may have in store for you. It had often struck me that there was a vein of poetic *expression* in the writing of George Eliot, of which a hundred instances might have been given. But the question of questions remained: Had she such a power, not to say necessity, of spontaneous expression in verse, that when we saw her poetry we should inevitably say, as Milton said of himself, that the expression in verse was the right-hand speech, that in prose the left-hand speech? How fine are the shades or gradations of quality in this respect, can be little understood by those who have not, by instinct or otherwise, fed, so to speak, on verse. For example, we all know that Wordsworth often wrote, in the printed form of verse, the most utterly detestable prose. Yet he could and did produce most exquisite verse. Again, a living

poet of the school of Wordsworth, Mr. Henry Taylor, barely, or little better than barely, enables us to say of him that verse is his right-hand and prose his left. Still, after some little demur, we *are* able to say it; and we call him a poet.

It must not be supposed that this is by any means a matter of mere fluency, correctness, or ease of numbers. Macaulay wrote verses far superior in these particulars to many of Mr. Henry Taylor's and many of Wordsworth's. Yet verse was, unequivocally, Macaulay's left-hand; and after adolescence, few people can read his verse for poetry. If I were not unwilling to rouse the prejudice of (I fear!) most of my readers, I should here add Edgar Poe; and, indeed, I really cannot spare him as an illustration. He must have some queer hybrid place, all to himself (which it would take an essay to define); but though he may be said to have felt verse his right-hand medium of expression, some few of us hesitate to call him a poet. Not to complicate this matter, let us come at once to the point. What is it that in excellent verse differentiates [1] that which is poetry and that which is not? Not mere fluency, but unconscious fluency; in a word, simplicity. Whatever art may do for the poet, he must be a *simple* musician to begin with.

In looking rapidly over this poem of George Eliot's I have — let me confess it — I have been inclined to fear that this "note" of simplicity is wanting. And, in spite of an abundance of fine passages, I fear, also, there is not the perfect fluency of use and wont. It has been maintained, under shelter of Elizabethan models, that you may

[1] I have seen this word objected to as a scientific foppery; but in its form of *to difference*, the verb is a good old English verb.

do almost anything in dramatic blank verse, in the way of lengthening and shortening the line. I object to the doctrine, and maintain that the Elizabethan examples cited are, in many instances, mere bits of negligence; and, in others, roughnesses of workmanship belonging to the lusty youth of a new art. Blank verse means ten-syllable iambic lines. If there are deviations from this form, as there often are, and should be, they must be regulated deviations, not accidental intrusions of other forms. . . . The versification of "The Spanish Gypsy" often breaks out into the very highest excellence; but it too often wants spontaneity and simplicity.

As the same observation applies to the lyrics, one has little hesitation in coming to the conclusion that the primal peculiarity which distinguishes the singer from the sayer is either lacking in George Eliot or that its function has suffered from disuse. I still hesitate to say suffered irreparably, because I still think the orbit of a genius like George Eliot's incalculable. With such a noble ambition, and such immense resources, one may do almost anything. Thus, though I confess I *now* think it improbable that George Eliot will ever exhibit in a poem the true simplicity of the singer, and compel her readers to admit that her music is better than her speech, I hesitate, or well-nigh hesitate, in saying even so much as that. It is very pathetic that a noble ambition should come so near its mark and yet fail. Only what are we to do? The truth must be spoken.

Against the presumption raised by the bulk of the writing must, in fairness, be set the evidence of particular passages, in which the author attains such high excellence that if one had seen those

passages alone, there would have been no hesitation or doubt on the score of melody. A few of these, in some of which the reader will catch fine touches of Elizabethan inspiration, I will pick out of the mass.

Take, for an example, this description of Zarca: —

> "He is of those
> Who steal the keys from snoring Destiny
> And make the prophets lie."

And this: —

> "My vagabonds are a seed more generous,
> Quick as the serpent, loving as the hound,
> And beautiful as disinherited gods.
> They have a promised land beyond the sea."

And this: —

> "Spring afternoons, when delicate shadows fall
> Pencilled upon the grass; high summer morns
> When white light rains upon the quiet sea
> And cornfields flush with ripeness."

And this: —

> "Present and silent and unchangeable
> As a celestial portent."

Lastly, the best lyric in the poem: —

> "The world is great: the birds all fly from me,
> The stars are golden fruit upon a tree
> All out of reach: my little sister went,
> And I am lonely.
>
> "The world is great: I tried to mount the hill
> Above the pines, where the light lies so still,
> But it rose higher: little Lisa went,
> And I am lonely.
>
> "The world is great: the wind comes rushing by,
> I wonder where it comes from; sea-birds cry
> And hurt my heart; my little sister went,
> And I am lonely.
>
> "The world is great: the people laugh and talk,
> And make loud holiday: how fast they walk!
> I'm lame, they push me: little Lisa went,
> And I am lonely."

Besides the want of spontaneity and simplicity in the verse, there are other points which make us feel, with whatever reluctance to admit the thing we undoubtingly see, that in "The Spanish Gypsy" something is wanting, and in that something everything that endears a poem *as* a poem. The writing has the diffuseness of literature rather than the condensation of poetry; and, admirable as some of it is, we wish it away: at the lowest, we say to ourselves, if a poet had had to utter this, our pleasure would have been perfect; but, as it is, what is before us is almost too good, and yet it is not good enough; it does not compel us to think, *le poëte a le frisson,* either while we read or afterwards. There is too much aggregation and accumulation about it; we are set thinking, and set feeling; we are agitated; but we are not thrilled by any single sudden notes. Lastly, or all but lastly, some of the frequent touches of humorous detail are fatal: —

> "Enter the Duke, Pablo, and Annibal,
> Exit the cat, retreating towards the dark."

This, and all this kind of thing, is gravely wrong in a poem. In some cases the phraseology has this species of modern familiarity and curtness; in others, the equally distinguishable *largo* of the modern philosophic manner, while what is supremely needed, namely, finish, is what we in vain go longing for.

Finally, the intellectual groundwork, or outline, of the poem shows far too plainly under the colouring of passion and the movement of the story. Since "Silas Marner" we have had no book from George Eliot to which this criticism would not, in some degree, be applicable. There is not room

here for any exhibition of all the recurring ideas of George Eliot's writings, but one in particular has been growing more and more prominent since "Silas Marner," and of which the first hint is in "The Mill on the Floss." "If the past is not to bind us," said Maggie Tulliver, in answer to the importunities of Stephen Guest, "what is?" In a noticeable and well-remembered review of Mr. Lecky's "History of Rationalism," George Eliot told us that the best part of our lives was made up of organized traditions (I quote from memory, but the meaning was plain). Putting these two things together, we get the intellectual ground-plan of "The Spanish Gypsy." Perhaps the illustrious author of the poem would resent the idea that any moral was intended to be conveyed by her recent writings; but, assuredly, this moral is thrust upon us everywhere, in a way which implies, if not intention, very eager belief.

Leaving the workmanship and the intellectual conception, or interwoven moral criticism, of the poem, and coming to the story, I am sure of only echoing what all the world will say when I call this in the highest degree poetic; and poetically dramatic, too. I must add, and with emphasis, that the story seems to me to gain, as a story, by this mode of presentation, — as I firmly believe "Romola" would have gained, if the question of perfect poetic expression could have been got over. In other words, although the manner of the novelist too often obtrudes itself in "The Spanish Gypsy," the author has told the story more effectingly, and with much more of truthfulness and local colour and manner, than she would have done if she had been writing it as a novel. Compare, for example, what I think are among the

very finest things George Eliot has ever done, — the scene between Juan the troubadour and the Gypsy girls, at the opening of Book III., and the scene in which Don Amador reads to the retainers of Don Silva from "Las Siete Partidas" the passage beginning, "Et esta gentileza aviene en tres maneras" (the critical reader who stumbles at the "et" must be informed that this is thirteenth-century Spanish), — compare these two scenes, I say, with the first scene in the barber's shop, and the scene of the Florentine joke, in "Romola," and note how very much the author gains by assuming the dramatic form. I have heard readers of much critical ability, and much poetic and dramatic instinct, too, complain that they did not see the force of those scenes in "Romola;" but it must be an incredibly dull person that misses the force of those scenes in "The Spanish Gypsy." The love-passages, also, are exquisitely beautiful; and in them again the author has gained by using the dramatic form. I dare to add that she has, however, lost by some of the (so to speak) "stage-directions." We don't want to be told how a man and woman of the type of Don Silva and Fedalma[1] look when they are saying certain things. We can feel pretty sure when the moment would be too sweet and solemn even for kissing. As Sam Slick said, "Natur' teaches that air."

The story of "The Spanish Gypsy" is simply this: Fedalma, a Zincala, is lost in her early childhood, and brought up by a Spanish duchess, Don Silva's mother. As she grows to womanhood Silva loves her, and she is on the point of marrying him

[1] I do not remember having ever seen this name before; it is an exquisitely musical word, and, I suppose, is intended to mean Faith of the Soul; or, more intelligibly to *some* people (not to be envied), Spiritual Fidelity.

when the narrative opens. But Fedalma's father, Zarca, a Gypsy Moses, Hiawatha, or both, devoted to the regeneration of his tribe, suddenly appears upon the scene and claims his daughter. Will she marry Don Silva, or go with her father and be the priestess of a new faith to the Zincali? She decides to accompany her father. Upon this Silva renounces his position as a Spanish noble and Christian knight and becomes a Zincalo. This implies the relinquishment of his post as commander of the town and fortress of Bedmár, which it is his duty to guard against the Moors; but he is not aware, at the time he takes the Gypsy oath, that Zarca is already in league with the Moors to take the fortress. Zarca and the Moors, however, succeed in investing the place, and some noble Spaniards, friends of Silva's, including his uncle, Father Isidor, are slain. Mad with remorse and rage, Silva stabs Zarca, but is allowed to go free. The poem closes with the departure of Silva to obtain absolution from the Pope, in order that he may recommence the career of a Christian knight, and the departure of Fedalma to begin, as best she may, the work bequeathed to her by her father, namely, the regeneration of the Zincali.

One thing is obvious on the face of this story, — that Silva was guilty, in so far as he was an apostate. But there will not be wanting readers who when asking the question who was the cause of all the misery with which the narrative overflows, will say, Fedalma. It was all very well to say that her past bound her. But which past? When Zarca started up, she was pledged by her "past" to Silva, and she loved him. What Zarca imported into the situation was, as lawyers say, new matter. The morrow would have seen her

married to Silva; and what *then,* if Zarca had appeared upon the stage with his Gypsy patriotism? All the future was dark to her, there was no reason whatever to believe that either she or Zarca would be able to regenerate the Gypsies; there was present actual proof that she was essential to Silva, life of his life, and the bond of his being. What right had she to forsake him? It is idle to discuss this, but since, as far as I can make out, there is distinct teaching in the poem, and that teaching is of no force unless Fedalma was, *beyond question,* right, it is perfectly fair and appropriate to suggest that there is room for question. It seems to me a little curious that George Eliot does not see that the same reason which made Sephardo, the astrologer, a son first and a Jew afterwards, would make Fedalma a betrothed woman first and a Zincala next.

But I do not dwell upon this point, because I look forward to another opportunity of dealing with what we are now entitled to assume is George Eliot's evangel, —

> ". . . . that Supreme, the irreversible Past."

Irreversible, no doubt, but — "Supreme!" The reader must not imagine that I am darting captiously at a word here. Not at all. George Eliot has a very distinct meaning, which is very distinctly affiliated to a certain mode of thought. To this mode of thought may be traced the astounding discords of her late writings, or rather the one astounding discord which runs through them.

In submitting to the world a poem, George Eliot is under one serious disadvantage. There are certain particulars in which she is not likely, in verse, to excel her own prose. Clear and pro-

found conception, and emphatic, luminous, and affecting presentation of character, is one of them. The power of inventing dramatic situation is another. In these particulars " The Spanish Gypsy " falls behind nothing that this distinguished writer has done; though I do not myself feel that either Fedalma or Zarca is dramatically presented to us. Indeed, vivid as George Eliot's painting of character always is, and profoundly intelligent, I never thought it dramatic. Nor is it. Here, as in the other books of George Eliot, character is always most vividly described and analyzed; and what the people do is, of course, in exact accordance with what is described; but none of them reveal themselves without having had the advantage of some criticism. None of them, that is to say, reveal themselves by action only, or by action and speech only, unless the speech takes a critical form. Zarca is shadowy, and Fedalma shadowy. But Juan and Silva we understand well because they are criticised; and Isidor the prior, and Sephardo the Jew, we understand well, because their talk is criticism of a kind which only a certain order of mind could produce. Perhaps the finest portions of the poem lie in some of these critical or quasi-critical passages. Let us take " The Astrologer's Study ": —

> "A room high up in Abderahman's tower,
> A window open to the still warm eve,
> And the bright disk of royal Jupiter.
> Lamps burning low make little atmospheres
> Of light amid the dimness; here and there
> Show books and phials, stones and instruments.
> In carved dark-oaken chair, unpillowed, sleeps
> Right in the rays of Jupiter a small man,
> In skull-cap bordered close with crisp gray curls,
> And loose black gown showing a neck and breast
> Protected by a dim-green amulet;
> Pale-faced, with finest nostril wont to breathe
> Ethereal passion in a world of thought;

Eyebrows jet-black and firm, yet delicate;
Beard scant and grizzled; mouth shut firm, with curves
So subtly turned to meanings exquisite,
You seem to read them as you read a word
Full-vowelled, long descended, pregnant, — rich
With legacies from long, laborious lives."

Juan's criticism of himself: —

"I can unleash my fancy if you wish
And hunt for phantoms: shoot an airy guess
And bring down airy likelihood, — some lie
Masked cunningly to look like royal truth
And cheat the shooter, while King Fact goes free,
Or else some image of reality
That doubt will handle and reject as false.
Ask for conjecture, — I can thread the sky
Like any swallow, but, if you insist
On knowledge that would guide a pair of feet
Right to Bedmár, across the Moorish bounds,
A mule that dreams of stumbling over stones
Is better stored."

And, assuredly, I must not omit the study of the character of Silva himself: —

"A man of high-wrought strain, fastidious
In his acceptance, dreading all delight
That speedy dies and turns to carrion:
His senses much exacting, deep instilled
With keen imagination's difficult needs; —
Like strong-limbed monsters studded o'er with eyes,
Their hunger checked by overwhelming vision,
Or that fierce lion in symbolic dream
Snatched from the ground by wings and new-endowed
With a man's thought-propelled relenting heart.
Silva was both the lion and the man;
First hesitating shrank, then fiercely sprang,
Or having sprung, turned pallid at his deed
And loosed the prize, paying his blood for naught.
A nature half-transformed, with qualities
That oft bewrayed each other, elements
Not blent but struggling, breeding strange effects,
Passing the reckoning of his friends or foes.
Haughty and generous, grave and passionate;
With tidal moments of devoutest awe,
Sinking anon to farthest ebb of doubt;
Deliberating ever, till the sting
Of a recurrent ardour made him rush
Right against reasons that himself had drilled
And marshalled painfully. A spirit framed
Too proudly special for obedience,
Too subtly pondering for mastery:
Born of a goddess with a mortal sire,

Heir of flesh-fettered, weak divinity,
Doom-gifted with long resonant consciousness
And perilous heightening of the sentient soul.
But look less curiously: life itself
May not express us all, may leave the worst
And the best too, like tunes in mechanism
Never awaked. In various catalogues
Objects stand variously."

There is only one living mind which could have given us poetico-psychological studies of human character like these. There is no comparison in range of faculty between such a mind and John Clare's. Is it not strange, and almost pathetic, that an uncultivated peasant could sing, and touch us with music, as no speech could; and yet that a highly cultivated mind like George Eliot's should almost overwhelm our judgment by the richness and volume of what it pours forth in the name of song; and yet that we are compelled to say the bird-note is missing?

MATTHEW BROWNE.

EXTRACTS FROM GEORGE ELIOT'S LIFE

(Edited by J. W. CROSS)

AMONG my wife's papers were four or five pages of manuscript headed "Notes on the Spanish Gypsy and Tragedy in General." There is no evidence as to the date at which this fragment was written, and it seems to have been left unfinished. But there was evidently some care to preserve it; and as I think she would not have objected to its presentation, I give it here exactly as it stands. It completes the history of the poem.

"The subject of 'The Spanish Gypsy' was originally suggested to me by a picture which hangs in the Scuola di' San Rocco at Venice, over the door of the large Sala containing Tintoretto's frescos. It is an Annunciation, said to be by Titian. Of course I had seen numerous pictures of this subject before; and the subject had always attracted me. But in this my second visit to the Scuola di' San Rocco, this small picture of Titian's, pointed out to me for the first time, brought a new train of thought. It occurred to me that here was a great dramatic motive of the same class as those used by the Greek dramatists, yet specifically differing from them. A young maiden, believing herself to be on the eve of the chief event of her life, — marriage, — about to share in the ordinary lot of womanhood, full of young hope, has suddenly announced to her that she is chosen

to fulfil a great destiny, entailing a terribly different experience from that of ordinary womanhood. She is chosen, not by any momentary arbitrariness, but as a result of foregoing hereditary conditions: she obeys. 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord.' Here, I thought, is a subject grander than that of Iphigenia, and it has never been used. I came home with this in my mind, meaning to give the motive a clothing in some suitable set of historical and local conditions. My reflections brought me nothing that would serve me, except that moment in Spanish history when the struggle with the Moors was attaining its climax, and when there was the gypsy race present under such conditions as would enable me to get my heroine and the hereditary claim on her among the gypsies. I required the opposition of race to give the need for renouncing the expectation of marriage. I could not use the Jews or the Moors, because the facts of their history were too conspicuously opposed to the working out of my catastrophe. Meanwhile the subject had become more and more pregnant to me. I saw it might be taken as a symbol of the part which is played in the general human lot by hereditary conditions in the largest sense, and of the fact that what we call duty is entirely made up of such conditions; for even in cases of just antagonism to the narrow view of hereditary claims, the whole background of the particular struggle is made up of our inherited nature. Suppose for a moment that our conduct at great epochs was determined entirely by reflection, without the immediate intervention of feeling, which supersedes reflection, our determination as to the right would consist in an adjustment of our individual needs to the dire necessities

of our lot, partly as to our natural constitution, partly as sharers of life with our fellow-beings. Tragedy consists in the terrible difficulty of this adjustment, —

> "'The dire strife of poor Humanity's afflicted will,
> Struggling in vain with ruthless destiny.'

Looking at individual lots, I seemed to see in each the same story, wrought out with more or less of tragedy, and I determined the elements of my drama under the influence of these ideas.

"In order to judge properly of the dramatic structure it must not be considered first in the light of doctrinal symbolism, but in the light of a tragedy representing some grand collision in the human lot. And it must be judged accordingly. A good tragic subject must represent a possible, sufficiently probable, not a common, action; and to be really tragic, it must represent irreparable collision between the individual and the general (in differing degrees of generality). It is the individual with whom we sympathize, and the general of which we recognize the irresistible power. The truth of this test will be seen by applying it to the greatest tragedies. The collision of Greek tragedy is often that between hereditary, entailed Nemesis and the peculiar individual lot, awakening our sympathy, of the particular man or woman whom the Nemesis is shown to grasp with terrific force. Sometimes, as in the Oresteia, there is the clashing of two irreconcilable requirements, — two duties, as we should say in these times. The murder of the father must be avenged by the murder of the mother, which must again be avenged. These two tragic relations of the individual and general, and of two irreconcilable 'oughts,' may

be — will be — seen to be almost always combined. The Greeks were not taking an artificial, entirely erroneous standpoint in their art, — a standpoint which disappeared altogether with their religion and their art. They had the same essential elements of life presented to them as we have, and their art symbolized these in grand schematic forms. The Prometheus represents the ineffectual struggle to redeem the small and miserable race of man, against the stronger adverse ordinances that govern the frame of things with a triumphant power. Coming to modern tragedies, what is it that makes Othello a great tragic subject? A story simply of a jealous husband is elevated into a most pathetic tragedy by the hereditary conditions of Othello's lot, which give him a subjective ground for distrust. Faust, Rigoletto ('Le Roi s'Amuse'), Brutus. It might be a reasonable ground of objection against the whole structure of 'The Spanish Gypsy,' if it were shown that the action is outrageously improbable, — lying outside all that can be congruously conceived of human actions. It is *not* a reasonable ground of objection that they would have done better to act otherwise, any more than it is a reasonable objection against the Iphigenia that Agamemnon would have done better not to sacrifice his daughter.

"As renunciations coming under the same great class, take the renunciation of marriage where marriage cannot take place without entailing misery on the children.

"A tragedy has not to expound why the individual must give way to the general; it has to show that it is compelled to give way, — the tragedy consisting in the struggle involved, and often in the entirely calamitous issue in spite of a grand

submission. Silva presents the tragedy of entire rebellion; Fedalma, of a grand submission, which is rendered vain by the effects of Silva's rebellion; Zarca, the struggle for a great end, rendered vain by the surrounding conditions of life.

"Now, what is the fact about our individual lots? A woman, say, finds herself on the earth with an inherited organization: she may be lame, she may inherit a disease, or what is tantamount to a disease; she may be a negress, or have other marks of race repulsive in the community where she is born, etc. One may go on for a long while without reaching the limits of the commonest inherited misfortunes. It is almost a mockery to say to such human beings, 'Seek your own happiness.' The utmost approach to well-being that can be made in such a case is through large resignation and acceptance of the inevitable, with as much effort to overcome any disadvantage as good sense will show to be attended with a likelihood of success. Any one may say, that is the dictate of mere rational reflection. But calm can in hardly any human organism be attained by rational reflection. Happily, we are not left to that. Love, pity, constituting sympathy, and generous joy with regard to the lot of our fellow-men comes in, — has been growing since the beginning, — enormously enhanced by wider vision of results, by an imagination actively interested in the lot of mankind generally; and these feelings become piety, — that is, loving, willing submission and heroic Promethean effort towards high possibilities, which may result from our individual life.

"There is really no moral 'sanction' but this inward impulse. The will of God is the same thing as the will of other men, compelling us to

work and avoid what they have seen to be harmful to social existence. Disjoined from any perceived good, the divine will is simply so much as we have ascertained of the facts of existence which compel obedience at our peril. Any other notion comes from the supposition of arbitrary revelation.

"That favourite view, expressed so often in Clough's poems, of doing duty in blindness as to the result, is likely to deepen the substitution of egoistic yearnings for really moral impulses. We cannot be utterly blind to the results of duty, since that cannot be duty which is not already judged to be for human good. To say the contrary is to say that mankind have reached no inductions as to what is for their good or evil.

"The art which leaves the soul in despair is laming to the soul, and is denounced by the healthy sentiment of an active community. The consolatory elements in 'The Spanish Gypsy' are derived from two convictions or sentiments which so conspicuously pervade it that they may be said to be its very warp, on which the whole action is woven. These are: (1) The importance of individual deeds; (2) The all-sufficiency of the soul's passions in determining sympathetic action.

"In Silva is presented the claim of fidelity to social pledges; in Fedalma, the claim constituted by an hereditary lot less consciously shared.

"With regard to the supremacy of love: if it were a fact without exception that man or woman never did renounce the joys of love, there could never have sprung up a notion that such renunciation could present itself as a duty. If no parents had ever cared for their children, how could parental affection have been reckoned among the elements of life? But what are the facts in relation

to this matter? Will any one say that faithfulness to the marriage tie has never been regarded as a duty, in spite of the presence of the profoundest passion experienced after marriage? Is Guinevere's conduct the type of duty?"

Poems of George Eliot

THE SPANISH GYPSY

BOOK I

'TIS the warm South, where Europe spreads her lands
Like fretted leaflets, breathing on the deep:
Broad-breasted Spain, leaning with equal love
(A calm earth-goddess crowned with corn and vines)
On the Mid Sea that moans with memories,
And on the untravelled Ocean, whose vast tides
Pant dumbly passionate with dreams of youth.
This river, shadowed by the battlements
And gleaming silvery towards the northern sky,
Feeds the famed stream that waters Andalus
And loiters, amorous of the fragrant air,
By Córdova and Seville to the bay
Fronting Algarva and the wandering flood
Of Guadiana. This deep mountain gorge
Slopes widening on the olive-pluméd plains
Of fair Granáda: one far-stretching arm
Points to Elvira, one to eastward heights
Of Alpujarras where the new-bathed Day
With oriflamme uplifted o'er the peaks
Saddens the breasts of northward-looking snows
That loved the night, and soared with soaring stars;

Flashing the signals of his nearing swiftness
From Almería's purple-shadowed bay
On to the far-off rocks that gaze and glow, —
On to Alhambra, strong and ruddy heart
Of glorious Morisma, gasping now,
A maiméd giant in his agony.
This town that dips its feet within the stream,
And seems to sit a tower-crowned Cybele,
Spreading her ample robe adown the rocks,
Is rich Bedmár: 't was Moorish long ago,
But now the Cross is sparkling on the Mosque,
And bells make Catholic the trembling air.
The fortress gleams in Spanish sunshine now
('T is south a mile before the rays are Moorish), —
Hereditary jewel, agraffe bright
On all the many-titled privilege
Of young Duke Silva. No Castilian knight
That serves Queen Isabel has higher charge;
For near this frontier sits the Moorish king,
Not Boabdil the waverer, who usurps
A throne he trembles in, and fawning licks
The feet of conquerors, but that fierce lion
Grisly El Zagal, who has made his lair
In Guadix' fort, and rushing thence with strength,
Half his own fierceness, half the untainted heart
Of mountain bands that fight for holiday,
Wastes the fair lands that lie by Alcalá,
Wreathing his horse's neck with Christian heads.

To keep the Christian frontier, — such high trust
Is young Duke Silva's; and the time is great.
(What times are little? To the sentinel
That hour is regal when he mounts on guard.)
The fifteenth century since the Man Divine
Taught and was hated in Capernaum
Is near its end, — is falling as a husk

Away from all the fruit its years have ripened.
The Moslem faith, now flickering like a torch
In a night struggle on this shore of Spain,
Glares, a broad column of advancing flame,
Along the Danube and Illyrian shore
Far into Italy, where eager monks,
Who watch in dreams and dream the while they watch,
See Christ grow paler in the baleful light,
Crying again the cry of the forsaken.
But faith, the stronger for extremity,
Becomes prophetic, hears the far-off tread
Of western chivalry, sees downward sweep
The archangel Michael with the gleaming sword,
And listens for the shriek of hurrying fiends
Chased from their revels in God's sanctuary.
So trusts the monk, and lifts appealing eyes
To the high dome, the Church's firmament,
Where the blue light-pierced curtain, rolled away
Reveals the throne and Him who sits thereon.
So trust the men whose best hope for the world
Is ever that the world is near its end:
Impatient of the stars that keep their course
And make no pathway for the coming Judge.

But other futures stir the world's great heart.
The West now enters on the heritage
Won from the tombs of mighty ancestors,
The seeds, the gold, the gems, the silent harps
That lay deep buried with the memories
Of old renown.
No more, as once in sunny Avignon,
The poet-scholar spreads the Homeric page,
And gazes sadly, like the deaf at song;
For now the old epic voices ring again
And vibrate with the beat and melody

Stirred by the warmth of old Ionian days.
The martyred sage, the Attic orator,
Immortally incarnate, like the gods,
In spiritual bodies, wingéd words
Holding a universe impalpable,
Find a new audience. Forevermore,
With grander resurrection than was feigned
Of Attila's fierce Huns, the soul of Greece
Conquers the bulk of Persia. The maimed form
Of calmly joyous beauty, marble-limbed,
Yet breathing with the thought that shaped its lips,
Looks mild reproach from out its opened grave
At creeds of terror; and the vine-wreathed god
Rising, a stifled question from the silence,
Fronts the pierced Image with the crown of thorns.
The soul of man is widening towards the past:
No longer hanging at the breast of life
Feeding in blindness to his parentage, —
Quenching all wonder with Omnipotence,
Praising a name with indolent piety, —
He spells the record of his long descent,
More largely conscious of the life that was
And from the height that shows where morning shone
On far-off summits pale and gloomy now,
The horizon widens round him, and the west
Looks vast with untracked waves whereon his gaze
Follows the flight of the swift-vanished bird
That like the sunken sun is mirrored still
Upon the yearning soul within the eye.
And so in Córdova through patient nights
Columbus watches, or he sails in dreams
Between the setting stars and finds new day;
Then wakes again to the old weary days,
Girds on the cord and frock of pale Saint Francis,

And like him zealous pleads with foolish men.
"I ask but for a million maravedis:
Give me three caravels to find a world,
New shores, new realms, new soldiers for the Cross.
Son cosas grandes!" Thus he pleads in vain;
Yet faints not utterly, but pleads anew,
Thinking, "God means it, and has chosen me."
For this man is the pulse of all mankind
Feeding an embryo future, offspring strange
Of the fond Present, that with mother-prayers
And mother-fancies looks for championship
Of all her loved beliefs and old-world ways
From that young Time she bears within her womb.
The sacred places shall be purged again,
The Turk converted, and the Holy Church,
Like the mild Virgin with the outspread robe,
Shall fold all tongues and nations lovingly.

But since God works by armies, who shall be
The modern Cyrus? Is it France most Christian,
Who with his lilies and brocaded knights,
French oaths, French vices, and the newest style
Of out-puffed sleeve, shall pass from west to east,
A winnowing fan to purify the seed
For fair millennial harvests soon to come?
Or is not Spain the land of chosen warriors? —
Crusaders consecrated from the womb,
Carrying the sword-cross stamped upon their souls
By the long yearnings of a nation's life,
Through all the seven patient centuries
Since first Pelayo and his resolute band
Trusted the God within their Gothic hearts
At Covadunga, and defied Mahound;
Beginning so the Holy War of Spain
That now is panting with the eagerness

Of labour near its end. The silver cross
Glitters o'er Malaga and streams dread light
On Moslem galleys, turning all their stores
From threats to gifts. What Spanish knight is he
Who, living now, holds it not shame to live
Apart from that hereditary battle
Which needs his sword? Castilian gentlemen
Choose not their task, — they choose to do it well.

The time is great, and greater no man's trust
Than his who keeps the fortress for his king,
Wearing great honours as some delicate robe
Brocaded o'er with names 't were sin to tarnish.
Born de la Cerda, Calatravan knight,
Count of Segura, fourth Duke of Bedmár,
Offshoot from that high stock of old Castile
Whose topmost branch is proud Medina Celi, —
Such titles with their blazonry are his
Who keeps this fortress, sworn Alcayde,
Lord of the valley, master of the town,
Commanding whom he will, himself commanded
By Christ his Lord who sees him from the Cross
And from bright heaven where the Mother pleads; —
By good Saint James upon the milk-white steed,
Who leaves his bliss to fight for chosen Spain; —
By the dead gaze of all his ancestors; —
And by the mystery of his Spanish blood
Charged with the awe and glories of the past.
See now with soldiers in his front and rear
He winds at evening through the narrow streets
That toward the Castle gate climb devious:
His charger, of fine Andalusian stock,
An Indian beauty, black but delicate,
Is conscious of the herald trumpet note,
The gathering glances, and familiar ways

That lead fast homeward: she forgets fatigue,
And at the light touch of the master's spur
Thrills with the zeal to bear him royally,
Arches her neck and clambers up the stones
As if disdainful of the difficult steep.
Night-black the charger, black the rider's plume,
But all between is bright with morning hues, —
Seems ivory and gold and deep blue gems,
And starry flashing steel and pale vermilion,
All set in jasper: on his surcoat white
Glitter the sword-belt and the jewelled hilt,
Red on the back and breast the holy cross,
And 'twixt the helmet and the soft-spun white
Thick tawny wavelets like the lion's mane
Turn backward from his brow, pale, wide, erect,
Shadowing blue eyes, — blue as the rain-washed sky
That braced the early stem of Gothic kings
He claims for ancestry. A goodly knight,
A noble caballero, broad of chest
And long of limb. So much the August sun,
Now in the west but shooting half its beams
Past a dark rocky profile toward the plain,
At winding opportunities across the slope
Makes suddenly luminous for all who see:
For women smiling from the terraced roofs;
For boys that prone on trucks with head up propped,
Lazy and curious, stare irreverent;
For men who make obeisance with degrees
Of good-will shading toward servility,
Where good-will ends and secret fear begins,
And curses, too, low-muttered through the teeth,
Explanatory to the God of Shem.
Five, grouped within a whitened tavern court
Of Moorish fashion, where the trellised vines

Purpling above their heads make odorous shade,
Note through the open door the passers-by,
Getting some rills of novelty to speed
The lagging stream of talk and help the wine.
'T is Christian to drink wine: whoso denies
His flesh at bidding save of Holy Church,
Let him beware and take to Christian sins
Lest he be taxed with Moslem sanctity.

The souls are five, the talkers only three.
(No time, most tainted by wrong faith and rule,
But holds some listeners and dumb animals.)
MINE HOST is one: he with the well-arched nose,
Soft-eyed, fat-handed, loving men for naught
But his own humour, patting old and young
Upon the back, and mentioning the cost
With confidential blandness, as a tax
That he collected much against his will
From Spaniards who were all his bosom friends:
Warranted Christian, — else how keep an inn,
Which calling asks true faith? though like his wine
Of cheaper sort, a trifle over-new.
His father was a convert, chose the chrism
As men choose physic, kept his chimney warm
With smokiest wood upon a Saturday,
Counted his gains and grudges on a chaplet,
And crossed himself asleep for fear of spies;
Trusting the God of Israel would see
'T was Christian tyranny that made him base.
Our host his son was born ten years too soon,
Had heard his mother call him Ephraim,
Knew holy things from common, thought it sin
To feast on days when Israel's children mourned,
So had to be converted with his sire,
To doff the awe he learned as Ephraim,

And suit his manners to a Christian name.
But infant awe, that unborn breathing thing,
Dies with what nourished it, can never rise
From the dead womb and walk and seek new pasture.
Baptism seemed to him a merry game
Not tried before, all sacraments a mode
Of doing homage for one's property,
And all religions a queer human whim
Or else a vice, according to degrees:
As, 't is a whim to like your chestnuts hot,
Burn your own mouth and draw your face awry,
A vice to pelt frogs with them, — animals
Content to take life coolly. And Lorenzo
Would have all lives made easy, even lives
Of spiders and inquisitors, yet still
Wishing so well to flies and Moors and Jews,
He rather wished the others easy death;
For loving all men clearly was deferred
Till all men loved each other. Such mine Host
With chiselled smile caressing Seneca,
The solemn mastiff leaning on his knee.

His right-hand guest is solemn as the dog,
Square-faced and massive: Blasco is his name,
A prosperous silversmith from Aragon;
In speech not silvery, rather tuned as notes
From a deep vessel made of plenteous iron,
Or some great bell of slow but certain swing
That, if you only wait, will tell the hour
As well as flippant clocks that strike in haste
And set off chiming a superfluous tune, —
Like Juan there, the spare man with the lute,
Who makes you dizzy with his rapid tongue,
Whirring athwart your mind with comment swift
On speech you would have finished by and by,

Shooting your bird for you while you are loading,
Cheapening your wisdom as a pattern known,
Woven by any shuttle on demand.
Can never sit quite still, too: sees a wasp
And kills it with a movement like a flash;
Whistles low notes or seems to thrum his lute
As a mere hyphen 'twixt two syllables
Of any steadier man; walks up and down
And snuffs the orange flowers and shoots a pea
To hit a streak of light let through the awning.
Has a queer face: eyes large as plums, a nose
Small, round, uneven, like a bit of wax
Melted and cooled by chance. Thin-fingered, lithe
And as a squirrel noiseless, startling men
Only by quickness. In his speech and look
A touch of graceful wildness, as of things
Not trained or tamed for uses of the world;
Most like the Fauns that roamed in days of old
About the listening whispering woods, and shared
The subtler sense of sylvan ears and eyes
Undulled by scheming thought, yet joined the rout
Of men and women on the festal days,
And played the syrinx too, and knew love's pains,
Turning their anguish into melody.
For Juan was a minstrel still, in times
When minstrelsy was held a thing outworn.
Spirits seem buried and their epitaph
Is writ in Latin by severest pens,
Yet still they flit above the trodden grave
And find new bodies, animating them
In quaint and ghostly way with antique souls.
So Juan was a troubadour revived,
Freshening life's dusty road with babbling rills
Of wit and song, living 'mid harnessed men
With limbs ungalled by armour, ready so
To soothe them weary, and to cheer them sad.

Guest at the board, companion in the camp,
A crystal mirror to the life around,
Flashing the comment keen of simple fact
Defined in words; lending brief lyric voice
To grief and sadness; hardly taking note
Of difference betwixt his own and others';
But rather singing as a listener
To the deep moans, the cries, the wild strong joys
Of universal Nature, old yet young.
Such Juan, the third talker, shimmering bright
As butterfly or bird with quickest life.

The silent ROLDAN has his brightness too,
But only in his spangles and rosettes.
His party-coloured vest and crimson hose
Are dulled with old Valencian dust, his eyes
With straining fifty years at gilded balls
To catch them dancing, or with brazen looks
At men and women as he made his jests
Some thousand times and watched to count the pence
His wife was gathering. His olive face
Has an old writing in it, characters
Stamped deep by grins that had no merriment,
The soul's rude mark proclaiming all its blank;
As on some faces that have long grown old
In lifting tapers up to forms obscene
On ancient walls and chuckling with false zest
To please my lord, who gives the larger fee
For that hard industry in apishness.
Roldan would gladly never laugh again;
Pensioned, he would be grave as any ox,
And having beans and crumbs and oil secured
Would borrow no man's jokes forevermore.
'T is harder now because his wife is gone,
Who had quick feet, and danced to ravishment

Of every ring jewelled with Spanish eyes,
But died and left this boy, lame from his birth,
And sad and obstinate, though when he will
He sings God-taught such marrow-thrilling strains
As seem the very voice of dying Spring,
A flute-like wail that mourns the blossoms gone,
And sinks, and is not, like their fragrant breath,
With fine transition on the trembling air.
He sits as if imprisoned by some fear,
Motionless, with wide eyes that seem not made
For hungry glancing of a twelve-yeared boy
To mark the living thing that he could tease,
But for the gaze of some primeval sadness
Dark twin with light in the creative ray.
This little PABLO has his spangles too,
And large rosettes to hide his poor left foot
Rounded like any hoof (his mother thought
God willed it so to punish all her sins).

I said the souls were five, — besides the dog.
But there was still a sixth, with wrinkled face,
Grave and disgusted with all merriment
Not less than Roldan. It is ANNIBAL,
The experienced monkey who performs the tricks,
Jumps through the hoops, and carries round the hat.
Once full of sallies and impromptu feats,
Now cautious not to light on aught that 's new,
Lest he be whipped to do it o'er again
From A to Z, and make the gentry laugh:
A misanthropic monkey, gray and grim,
Bearing a lot that has no remedy
For want of concert in the monkey tribe.

We see the company, above their heads
The braided matting, golden as ripe corn,

Stretched in a curving strip close by the grapes,
Elsewhere rolled back to greet the cooler sky;
A fountain near, vase-shapen and broad-lipped,
Where timorous birds alight with tiny feet,
And hesitate and bend wise listening ears,
And fly away again with undipped beak.
On the stone floor the juggler's heaped-up goods,
Carpet and hoops, viol and tambourine,
Where Annibal sits perched with brows severe,
A serious ape whom none take seriously,
Obliged in this fool's world to earn his nuts
By hard buffoonery. We see them all,
And hear their talk, — the talk of Spanish men,
With Southern intonation, vowels turned
Caressingly between the consonants,
Persuasive, willing, with such intervals
As music borrows from the wooing birds,
That plead with subtly curving, sweet descent, —
And yet can quarrel, as these Spaniards can.

JUAN (*near the doorway*)

You hear the trumpet? There 's old Ramon's blast,
No bray but his can shake the air so well.
He takes his trumpeting as solemnly
As angel charged to wake the dead; thinks war
Was made for trumpeters, and their great art
Made solely for themselves who understand it.
His features all have shaped themselves to blowing,
And when his trumpet 's bagged or left at home
He seems a chattel in a broker's booth,
A spoutless watering-can, a promise to pay
No sum particular. O fine old Ramon!
The blasts get louder and the clattering hoofs;
They crack the ear as well as heaven's thunder
For owls that listen blinking. There 's the banner.

HOST (*joining him: the others follow to the door*)

The Duke has finished reconnoitring, then?
We shall hear news. They say he means a sally, —
Would strike El Zagal's Moors as they push home
Like ants with booty heavier than themselves;
Then, joined by other nobles with their bands,
Lay siege to Guadix. Juan, you 're a bird
That nest within the Castle. What say you?

JUAN

Naught, I say naught. 'T is but a toilsome game
To bet upon that feather Policy,
And guess where after twice a hundred puffs
'T will catch another feather crossing it:
Guess how the Pope will blow and how the king;
What force my lady's fan has; how a cough
Seizing the Padre's throat may raise a gust,
And how the queen may sigh the feather down.
Such catching at imaginary threads,
Such spinning twisted air, is not for me.
If I should want a game, I 'll rather bet
On racing snails, two large, slow, lingering snails, —
No spurring, equal weights, — a chance sublime,
Nothing to guess at, pure uncertainty.
Here comes the Duke. They give but feeble shouts
And some look sour.

HOST

That spoils a fair occasion.
Civility brings no conclusions with it,
And cheerful *Vivas* make the moments glide
Instead of grating like a rusty wheel.

JUAN

O they are dullards, kick because they 're stung,
And bruise a friend to show they hate a wasp.

HOST

Best treat your wasp with delicate regard;
When the right moment comes say, "By your leave,"
Use your heel — so! and make an end of him.
That 's if we talked of wasps; but our young Duke, —
Spain holds not a more gallant gentleman.
Live, live, Duke Silva! 'T is a rare smile he has,
But seldom seen.

JUAN

A true hidalgo's smile,
That gives much favour, but beseeches none.
His smile is sweetened by his gravity:
It comes like dawn upon Sierra snows,
Seeming more generous for the coldness gone;
Breaks from the calm, — a sudden opening flower
On dark deep waters: one moment shrouded close,
A mystic shrine, the next a full-rayed star,
Thrilling, pulse-quickening as a living word.
I 'll make a song of that.

HOST

Prithee, not now.
You 'll fall to staring like a wooden saint,
And wag your head as it were set on wires.
Here 's fresh sherbét. Sit, be good company.
(*To* BLASCO.) You are a stranger, sir, and cannot know
How our Duke's nature suits his princely frame.

BLASCO

Nay, but I marked his spurs, — chased cunningly!
A duke should know good gold and silver plate;

Then he will know the quality of mine.
I 've ware for tables and for altars too,
Our Lady in all sizes, crosses, bells:
He 'll need such weapons full as much as swords
If he would capture any Moorish town.
For, let me tell you, when a mosque is cleansed . . .

JUAN

The demons fly so thick from sound of bells
And smell of incense, you may see the air
Streaked with them as with smoke. Why, they are spirits:
You may well think how crowded they must be
To make a sort of haze.

BLASCO

I knew not that.
Still, they 're of smoky nature, demons are;
And since you say so, — well, it proves the more
The need of bells and censers. Ay, your Duke
Sat well: a true hidalgo. I can judge, —
Of harness specially. I saw the camp,
The royal camp at Velez Malaga.
'T was like the court of heaven, — such liveries!
And torches carried by the score at night
Before the nobles. Sirs, I made a dish
To set an emerald in would fit a crown,
For Don Alonzo, lord of Aguilar.
Your Duke 's no whit behind him in his mien
Or harness either. But you seem to say
The people love him not.

HOST

They 've naught against him.
But certain winds will make men's temper bad.

When the Solano blows hot venomed breath,
It acts upon men's knives: steel takes to stabbing
Which else, with cooler winds, were honest steel,
Cutting but garlick. There 's a wind just now
Blows right from Seville —

BLASCO

Ay, you mean the wind . . .
Yes, yes, a wind that 's rather hot . . .

HOST

With fagots.

JUAN

A wind that suits not with our townsmen's blood.
Abram, 't is said, objected to be scorched,
And, as the learned Arabs vouch, he gave
The antipathy in full to Ishmaël.
'T is true, these patriarchs had their oddities.

BLASCO

Their oddities? I 'm of their mind, I know.
Though, as to Abraham and Ishmaël,
I 'm an old Christian, and owe naught to them
Or any Jew among them. But I know
We made a stir in Saragossa — we:
The men of Aragon ring hard, — true metal.
Sirs, I 'm no friend to heresy, but then
A Christian's money is not safe. As how?
A lapsing Jew or any heretic
May owe me twenty ounces: suddenly
He 's prisoned, suffers penalties, — 't is well:
If men will not believe, 't is good to make them,
But let the penalties fall on them alone.

The Jew is stripped, his goods are confiscate;
Now, where, I pray you, go my twenty ounces?
God knows, and perhaps the King may, but not I
And more, my son may lose his young wife's dower
Because 't was promised since her father's soul
Fell to wrong thinking. How was I to know?
I could but use my sense and cross myself.
Christian is Christian, — I give in, — but still
Taxing is taxing, though you call it holy.
We Saragossans liked not this new tax
They call the — nonsense, I 'm from Aragon!
I speak too bluntly. But, for Holy Church,
No man believes more.

HOST

Nay, sir, never fear.
Good Master Roldan here is no delator.

ROLDAN (*starting from a reverie*)

You speak to me, sirs? I perform to-night —
The Plaça Santiago. Twenty tricks,
All different. I dance, too. And the boy
Sings like a bird. I crave your patronage.

BLASCO

Faith, you shall have it, sir. In travelling
I take a little freedom, and am gay.
You marked not what I said just now?

ROLDAN

I? no.
I pray your pardon. I 've a twinging knee
That makes it hard to listen. You were saying?

BLASCO

Nay, it was naught. (*Aside to* HOST.) Is it his deepness?

HOST

No.
He 's deep in nothing but his poverty.

BLASCO

But 't was his poverty that made me think . . .

HOST

His piety might wish to keep the feasts
As well as fasts. No fear; he hears not.

BLASCO

Good.
I speak my mind about the penalties,
But, look you, I 'm against assassination.
You know my meaning — Master Arbués,
The grand Inquisitor in Aragon.
I knew naught,—paid no copper towards the deed.
But I was there, at prayers, within the church.
How could I help it? Why, the saints were there,
And looked straight on above the altars. I . . .

JUAN

Looked carefully another way.

BLASCO

Why, at my beads.
'T was after midnight, and the canons all
Were chanting matins. I was not in church
To gape and stare. I saw the martyr kneel:
I never liked the look of him alive, —

He was no martyr then. I thought he made
An ugly shadow as he crept athwart
The bands of light, then passed within the gloom
By the broad pillar. 'T was in our great Seo,
At Saragossa. The pillars tower so large
You cross yourself to see them, lest white Death
Should hide behind their dark. And so it was.
I looked away again and told my beads
Unthinkingly; but still a man has ears;
And right across the chanting came a sound
As if a tree had crashed above the roar
Of some great torrent. So it seemed to me;
For when you listen long and shut your eyes
Small sounds get thunderous. And he 'd a shell
Like any lobster: a good iron suit
From top to toe beneath the innocent serge.
That made the telltale sound. But then came shrieks.
The chanting stopped and turned to rushing feet,
And in the midst lay Master Arbués,
Felled like an ox. 'T was wicked butchery.
Some honest men had hoped it would have scared
The Inquisition out of Aragon.
'T was money thrown away, — I would say, crime, —
Clean thrown away.

HOST

That was a pity now.
Next to a missing thrust, what irks me most
Is a neat well-aimed stroke that kills your man,
Yet ends in mischief, — as in Aragon.
It was a lesson to our people here.
Else there 's a monk within our city walls,
A holy, high-born, stern Dominican,
They might have made the great mistake to kill.

BLASCO

What! is he? . . .

HOST

Yes; a Master Arbués
Of finer quality. The Prior here
And uncle to our Duke.

BLASCO

He will want plate:
A holy pillar or a crucifix.
But, did you say, he was like Arbués?

JUAN

As a black eagle with gold beak and claws
Is like a raven. Even in his cowl,
Covered from head to foot, the Prior is known
From all the black herd round. When he uncovers
And stands white-frocked, with ivory face, his eyes
Black-gleaming, black his coronet of hair
Like shredded jasper, he seems less a man
With struggling aims than pure incarnate Will,
Fit to subdue rebellious nations, nay,
That human flesh he breathes in, charged with passion
Which quivers in his nostril and his lip,
But disciplined by long-indwelling will
To silent labour in the yoke of law.
A truce to thy comparisons, Lorenzo!
Thine is no subtle nose for difference;
'T is dulled by feigning and civility.

HOST

Pooh, thou 'rt a poet, crazed with finding words
May stick to things and seem like qualities.
No pebble is a pebble in thy hands:

'T is a moon out of work, a barren egg,
Or twenty things that no man sees but thee.
Our father Isidor 's — a living saint,
And that to heresy, some townsmen think:
Saints should be dead, according to the Church.
My mind is this: the Father is so holy
'T were sin to wish his soul detained from bliss.
Easy translation to the realms above,
The shortest journey to the seventh heaven,
Is what I 'd never grudge him.

BLASCO

Piously said.
Look you, I 'm dutiful, obey the Church
When there 's no help for it: I mean to say,
When Pope and Bishop and all customers
Order alike. But there be bishops now,
And were aforetime, who have held it wrong,
This hurry to convert the Jews. As, how?
Your Jew pays tribute to the bishop, say.
That 's good, and must please God, to see the Church
Maintained in ways that ease the Christian's purse.
Convert the Jew, and where 's the tribute, pray?
He lapses, too: 't is slippery work, conversion:
And then the holy taxing carries off
His money at one sweep. No tribute more!
He 's penitent or burnt, and there 's an end.
Now guess which pleases God . . .

JUAN

Whether he likes
A well-burnt Jew or well-fed bishop best.

[While Juan put this problem theologic
Entered, with resonant step, another guest, —

A soldier: all his keenness in his sword,
His eloquence in scars upon his cheek,
His virtue in much slaying of the Moor:
With brow well-creased in horizontal folds
To save the space, as having naught to do:
Lips prone to whistle whisperingly, — no tune,
But trotting rhythm: meditative eyes,
Most often fixed upon his legs and spurs:
Invited much, and held good company:
Styled Captain Lopez.]

LOPEZ

At your service, sirs.

JUAN

Ha, Lopez? Why, thou hast a face full-charged
As any herald's. What news of the wars?

LOPEZ

Such news as is most bitter on my tongue.

JUAN

Then spit it forth.

HOST

Sit, Captain: here 's a cup,
Fresh-filled. What news?

LOPEZ

'T is bad. We make no sally:
We sit still here and wait whate'er the Moor
Shall please to do.

HOST

Some townsmen will be glad.

LOPEZ

Glad, will they be? But I 'm not glad, not I,
Nor any Spanish soldier of clean blood.
But the Duke's wisdom is to wait a siege
Instead of laying one. Therefore — meantime —
He will be married straightway.

HOST

Ha, ha, ha!
Thy speech is like an hourglass; turn it down
The other way, 't will stand as well, and say
The Duke will wed, therefore he waits a siege.
But what say Don Diego and the Prior?
The holy uncle and the fiery Don?

LOPEZ

Oh there be sayings running all abroad
As thick as nuts o'erturned. No man need lack.
Some say, 't was letters changed the Duke's intent:
From Malaga, says Blas. From Rome, says Quintin.
From spies at Guadix, says Sebastian.
Some say, 't is all a pretext, — say, the Duke
Is but a lapdog hanging on a skirt,
Turning his eyeballs upward like a monk:
'T was Don Diego said that, — so says Blas;
Last week, he said . . .

JUAN

Oh do without the " said "!
Open thy mouth and pause in lieu of it.
I had as lief be pelted with a pea
Irregularly in the selfsame spot
As hear such iteration without rule,
Such torture of uncertain certainty.

LOPEZ

Santiago! Juan, thou art hard to please.
I speak not for my own delighting, I.
I can be silent, I.

BLASCO

Nay, sir, speak on!
I like your matter well. I deal in plate.
This wedding touches me. Who is the bride?

LOPEZ

One that some say the Duke does ill to wed.
One that his mother reared — God rest her soul! —
Duchess Diana, — she who died last year.
A bird picked up away from any nest.
Her name — the Duchess gave it — is Fedalma.
No harm in that. But the Duke stoops, they say,
In wedding her. And that 's the simple truth.

JUAN

Thy simple truth is but a false opinion:
The simple truth of asses who believe
Their thistle is the very best of food.
Fie, Lopez, thou a Spaniard with a sword
Dreamest a Spanish noble ever stoops
By doing honour to the maid he loves!
He stoops alone when he dishonours her.

LOPEZ

Nay, I said naught against her.

JUAN

Better not.
Else I would challenge thee to fight with wits,

And spear thee through and through ere thou
couldst draw
The bluntest word. Yes, yes, consult thy spurs:
Spurs are a sign of knighthood, and should tell
thee
That knightly love is blent with reverence
As heavenly air is blent with heavenly blue.
Don Silva's heart beats to a chivalric tune:
He wills no highest-born Castilian dame,
Betrothed to highest noble, should be held
More sacred than Fedalma. He enshrines
Her virgin image for the general worship
And for his own, — will guard her from the world,
Nay, his profaner self, lest he should lose
The place of his religion. He does well.
Naught can come closer to the poets' strain.

HOST

Or further from their practice, Juan, eh?
If thou 'rt a specimen?

JUAN

Wrong, my Lorenzo!
Touching Fedalma the poor poet plays
A finer part even than the noble Duke.

LOPEZ

By making ditties, singing with round mouth
Likest a crowing cock? Thou meanest that?

JUAN

Lopez, take physic, thou art getting ill,
Growing descriptive; 't is unnatural.
I mean, Don Silva's love expects reward,
Kneels with a heaven to come; but the poor poet

Worships without reward, nor hopes to find
A heaven save in his worship. He adores
The sweetest woman for her sweetness' sake,
Joys in the love that was not born for him,
Because 't is lovingness, as beggars joy,
Warming their naked limbs on wayside walls,
To hear a tale of princes and their glory.
There 's a poor poet (poor, I mean, in coin)
Worships Fedalma with so true a love
That if her silken robe were changed for rags,
And she were driven out to stony wilds
Barefoot, a scornéd wanderer, he would kiss
Her ragged garment's edge, and only ask
For leave to be her slave. Digest that, friend,
Or let it lie upon thee as a weight
To check light thinking of Fedalma.

LOPEZ

I?
I think no harm of her; I thank the saints
I wear a sword and peddle not in thinking.
'T is Father Marcos says she 'll not confess
And loves not holy water; says her blood
Is infidel; says the Duke's wedding her
Is union of light with darkness.

JUAN

Tush!

[Now Juan — who by snatches touched his lute
With soft arpeggio, like a whispered dream
Of sleeping music, while he spoke of love, —
In jesting anger at the soldier's talk
Thrummed loud and fast, then faster and more
loud,
Till, as he answered, "Tush!" he struck a chord

Sudden as whip-crack close by Lopez' ear.
Mine host and Blasco smiled, the mastiff barked,
Roldan looked up and Annibal looked down,
Cautiously neutral in so new a case;
The boy raised longing, listening eyes that seemed
An exiled spirit's waiting in strained hope
Of voices coming from the distant land.
But Lopez bore the assault like any rock:
That was not what he drew his sword at — he!
He spoke with neck erect.]

LOPEZ

If that 's a hint
The company should ask thee for a song,
Sing, then!

HOST

Ay, Juan, sing, and jar no more.
Something brand new. Thou 'rt wont to make my ear
A test of novelties. Hast thou aught fresh?

JUAN

As fresh as rain-drops. Here 's a Cancion
Springs like a tiny mushroom delicate
Out of the priest's foul scandal of Fedalma.

[He preluded with questioning intervals,
Rising, then falling just a semitone,
In minor cadence, — sound with poiséd wing
Hovering and quivering towards the needed fall.
Then in a voice that shook the willing air
With masculine vibration sang this song.

Should I long that dark were fair?
Say, O song!
Lacks my love aught, that I should long?

Dark the night, with breath all flow'rs,
And tender broken voice that fills
With ravishment the listening hours:
Whisperings, wooings,
Liquid ripples and soft ring-dove cooings
In low-toned rhythm that love's aching stills.
Dark the night,
Yet is she bright,
For in her dark she brings the mystic star,
Trembling yet strong, as is the voice of love,
From some unknown afar.
O radiant Dark! O darkly fostered ray!
Thou hast a joy too deep for shallow Day.

While Juan sang, all round the tavern court
Gathered a constellation of black eyes.
Fat Lola leaned upon the balcony
With arms that might have pillowed Hercules
(Who built, 't is known, the mightiest Spanish towns);
Thin Alda's face, sad as a wasted passion,
Leaned o'er the nodding baby's; 'twixt the rails
The little Pepe showed his two black beads,
His flat-ringed hair and small Semitic nose
Complete and tiny as a new-born minnow;
Patting his head and holding in her arms
The baby senior, stood Lorenzo's wife
All negligent, her kerchief discomposed
By little clutches, woman's coquetry
Quite turned to mother's cares and sweet content.
These on the balcony, while at the door
Gazed the lank boys and lazy-shouldered men.
'T is likely too the rats and insects peeped,
Being southern Spanish ready for a lounge.
The singer smiled, as doubtless Orpheus smiled,
To see the animals both great and small,

The mountainous elephant and scampering mouse,
Held by the ears in decent audience;
Then, when mine host desired the strain once more,
He fell to preluding with rhythmic change
Of notes recurrent, soft as pattering drops
That fall from off the eaves in faëry dance
When clouds are breaking; till at measured pause
He struck, in rare responsive chords, a réfrain.]

HOST

Come, then, a gayer rómaunt, if thou wilt:
I quarrel not with change. What say you, Captain?

LOPEZ

All 's one to me. I note no change of tune,
Not I, save in the ring of horses' hoofs,
Or in the drums and trumpets when they call
To action or retreat. I ne'er could see
The good of singing.

BLASCO

Why, it passes time, —
Saves you from getting over-wise: that 's good.
For, look you, fools are merry here below,
Yet they will go to heaven all the same,
Having the sacraments; and, look you, heaven
Is a long holiday, and solid men,
Used to much business, might be ill at ease
Not liking play. And so in travelling
I shape myself betimes to idleness
And take fools' pleasures . . .

HOST

Hark, the song begins!

JUAN (*sings*)

Maiden, crowned with glossy blackness,
Lithe as panther forest-roaming,
Long-armed naiad, when she dances,
On a stream of ether floating, —
Bright, O bright Fedalma!

Form all curves like softness drifted,
Wave-kissed marble roundly dimpling,
Far-off music slowly wingéd,
Gently rising, gently sinking, —
Bright, O bright Fedalma!

Pure as rain-tear on a rose-leaf,
Cloud high-born in noonday spotless,
Sudden perfect as the dew-bead,
Gem of earth and sky begotten, —
Bright, O bright Fedalma!

Beauty has no mortal father,
Holy light her form engendered
Out of tremor, yearning, gladness,
Presage sweet and joy remembered, —
Child of Light, Fedalma!

BLASCO

Faith, a good song, sung to a stirring tune.
I like the words returning in a round;
It gives a sort of sense. Another such!

ROLDAN (*rising*)

Sirs, you will hear my boy. 'T is very hard
When gentles sing for naught to all the town.
How can a poor man live? And now 't is time
I go to the Plaça, — who will give me pence
When he can hear hidalgos and give naught?

JUAN

True, friend. Be pacified. I 'll sing no more.
Go thou, and we will follow. Never fear.
My voice is common as the ivy leaves,
Plucked in all seasons, — bears no price; the boy's
Is like the almond blossoms. Ah, he 's lame!

HOST

Load him not heavily. Here, Pedro! help.
Go with them to the Plaça, take the hoops.
The sights will pay thee.

BLASCO

I 'll be there anon,
And set the fashion with a good white coin.
But let us see as well as hear.

HOST

Ay, prithee.
Some tricks, a dance.

BLASCO

Yes, 't is more rational.

ROLDAN (*turning round with the bundle and monkey on his shoulders*)

You shall see all, sirs. There 's no man in Spain
Knows his art better. I 've a twinging knee
Oft hinders dancing, and the boy is lame.
But no man's monkey has more tricks than mine.

[At this high praise the gloomy Annibal,
Mournful professor of high drollery,
Seemed to look gloomier, and the little troop
Went slowly out, escorted from the door

By all the idlers. From the balcony
Slowly subsided the black radiance
Of agate eyes, and broke in chattering sounds,
Coaxings and trampings, and the small hoarse
squeak
Of Pepe's reed. And our group talked again.]

HOST

I 'll get this juggler, if he quits him well,
An audience here as choice as can be lured.
For me, when a poor devil does his best,
'T is my delight to soothe his soul with praise.
What though the best be bad? remains the good
Of throwing food to a lean hungry dog.
I 'd give up the best jugglery in life
To see a miserable juggler pleased.
But that 's my humour. Crowds are malcontent,
And cruel as the Holy . . . Shall we go?
All of us now together?

LOPEZ

Well, not I.
I may be there anon, but first I go
To the lower prison. There is strict command
That all our Gypsy prisoners shall to-night
Be lodged within the fort. They 've forged enough
Of balls and bullets, — used up all the metal.
At morn to-morrow they must carry stones
Up the south tower. 'T is a fine stalwart band,
Fit for the hardest tasks. Some say, the queen
Would have the Gypsies banished with the Jews.
Some say, 't were better harness them for work.
They 'd feed on any filth and save the Spaniard.
Some say — but I must go. 'T will soon be time
To head the escort. We shall meet again.

BLASCO

Go, sir, with God (*exit* LOPEZ). A very proper man,
And soldierly. But, for this banishment
Some men are hot on, it ill pleases me.
The Jews, now (sirs, if any Christian here
Had Jews for ancestors, I blame him not;
We cannot all be Goths of Aragon), —
Jews are not fit for heaven, but on earth
They are most useful. 'T is the same with mules,
Horses, or oxen, or with any pig
Except Saint Anthony's. They are useful here
(The Jews, I mean) though they may go to hell.
And, look you, useful sins, — why Providence
Sends Jews to do 'em, saving Christian souls.
The very Gypsies, curbed and harnessed well,
Would make draught cattle, feed on vermin too,
Cost less than grazing brutes, and turn bad food
To handsome carcasses; sweat at the forge
For little wages, and well drilled and flogged
Might work like slaves, some Spaniards looking on.
I deal in plate, and am no priest to say
What God may mean, save when he means plain sense;
But when he sent the Gypsies wandering
In punishment because they sheltered not
Our Lady and Saint Joseph (and no doubt
Stole the small ass they fled with into Egypt),
Why send them here? 'T is plain he saw the use
They 'd be to Spaniards. Shall we banish them,
And tell God we know better? 'T is a sin.
They talk of vermin; but, sirs, vermin large
Were made to eat the small, or else to eat
The noxious rubbish, and picked Gypsy men
Might serve in war to climb, be killed, and fall,

To make an easy ladder. Once I saw
A Gypsy sorcerer, at a spring and grasp,
Kill one who came to seize him: talk of strength!
Nay, swiftness too, for while we crossed ourselves
He vanished like — say, like . . .

JUAN

A swift black snake,
Or like a living arrow fledged with will.

BLASCO

Why, did you see him, pray?

JUAN

Not then, but now
As painters see the many in the one.
We have a Gypsy in Bedmár whose frame
Nature compacted with such fine selection,
'T would yield a dozen types: all Spanish knights,
From him who slew Rolando at the pass
Up to the mighty Cid; all deities,
Thronging Olympus in fine attitudes;
Or all hell's heroes whom the poet saw
Tremble like lions, writhe like demigods.

HOST

Pause not yet, Juan, — more hyperbole!
Shoot upward still and flare in meteors
Before thou sink to earth in dull brown fact.

BLASCO

Nay, give me fact, high shooting suits not me.
I never stare to look for soaring larks.
What is this Gypsy?

HOST

Chieftain of a band,
The Moor's allies, whom full a month ago
Our Duke surprised and brought as captives home.
He needed smiths, and doubtless the brave Moor
Has missed some useful scouts and archers too.
Juan's fantastic pleasure is to watch
These Gypsies forging, and to hold discourse
With this great chief, whom he transforms at will
To sage or warrior, and like the sun
Plays daily at fallacious alchemy,
Turns sand to gold and dewy spider-webs
To myriad rainbows. Still the sand is sand,
And still in sober shade you see the web.
'T is so, I 'll wager, with his Gypsy chief, —
A piece of stalwart cunning, nothing more.

JUAN

No! My invention had been all too poor
To frame this Zarca as I saw him first.
'T was when they stripped him. In his chieftain's gear,
Amidst his men he seemed a royal barb
Followed by wild-maned Andalusian colts.
He had a necklace of a strange device
In finest gold of unknown workmanship,
But delicate as Moorish, fit to kiss
Fedalma's neck, and play in shadows there.
He wore fine mail, a rich-wrought sword and belt,
And on his surcoat black a broidered torch,
A pine-branch flaming, grasped by two dark hands.
But when they stripped him of his ornaments
It was the bawbles lost their grace, not he.
His eyes, his mouth, his nostril, all inspired

With scorn that mastered utterance of scorn,
With power to check all rage until it turned
To ordered force, unleashed on chosen prey, —
It seemed the soul within him made his limbs
And made them grand. The bawbles were well
gone.
He stood the more a king, when bared to man.

BLASCO

Maybe. But nakedness is bad for trade,
And is not decent. Well-wrought metal, sir,
Is not a bawble. Had you seen the camp,
The royal camp at Velez Malaga,
Ponce de Leon and the other dukes,
The king himself and all his thousand knights
For body-guard, 't would not have left you breath
To praise a Gypsy thus. A man 's a man;
But when you see a king, you see the work
Of many thousand men. King Ferdinand
Bears a fine presence, and hath proper limbs;
But what though he were shrunken as a relic?
You 'd see the gold and gems that cased him o'er,
And all the pages round him in brocade,
And all the lords, themselves a sort of kings,
Doing him reverence. That strikes an awe
Into a common man, — especially
A judge of plate.

HOST

Faith, very wisely said.
Purge thy speech, Juan. It is over-full
Of this same Gypsy. Praise the Catholic King.
And come now, let us see the juggler's skill.

The Plaça Santiago

'T is daylight still, but now the golden cross
Uplifted by the angel on the dome
Stands rayless in calm colour clear-defined
Against the northern blue; from turrets high
The flitting splendour sinks with folded wing
Dark-hid till morning, and the battlements
Wear soft relenting whiteness mellowed o'er
By summers generous and winters bland.
Now in the east the distance casts its veil,
And gazes with a deepening earnestness.
The old rain-fretted mountains in their robes
Of shadow-broken gray; the rounded hills
Reddened with blood of Titans, whose huge limbs,
Entombed within, feed full the hardy flesh
Of cactus green and blue, broad-sworded aloes;
The cypress soaring black above the lines
Of white court-walls; the jointed sugar-canes
Pale-golden with their feathers motionless
In the warm quiet; — all thought-teaching form
Utters itself in firm unshimmering hues.
For the great rock has screened the westering sun
That still on plains beyond streams vaporous gold
Among the branches; and within Bedmár
Has come the time of sweet serenity
When colour glows unglittering, and the soul
Of visible things shows silent happiness,
As that of lovers trusting though apart.
The ripe-cheeked fruits, the crimson-petalled
flowers;
The wingéd life that pausing seems a gem
Cunningly carven on the dark green leaf;
The face of man with hues supremely blent
To difference fine as of a voice 'mid sounds: —
Each lovely light-dipped thing seems to emerge

Flushed gravely from baptismal sacrament.
All beauteous existence rests, yet wakes,
Lies still, yet conscious, with clear open eyes
And gentle breath and mild suffuséd joy.
'T is day, but day that falls like melody
Repeated on a string with graver tones, —
Tones such as linger in a long farewell.

The Plaça widens in the passivė air, —
The Plaça Santiago, where the church,
A mosque converted, shows an eyeless face
Red-checkered, faded, doing penance still, —
Bearing with Moorish arch the imaged saint,
Apostle, baron, Spanish warrior,
Whose charger's hoofs trample the turbaned dead,
Whose banner with the Cross, the bloody sword,
Flashes athwart the Moslem's glazing eye,
And mocks his trust in Allah who forsakes.
Up to the church the Plaça gently slopes,
In shape most like the pious palmer's shell,
Girdled with low white houses; high above
Tower the strong fortress and sharp-angled wall
And well-flanked castle gate. From o'er the roofs,
And from the shadowed pátios cool, there spreads
The breath of flowers and aromatic leaves
Soothing the sense with bliss indefinite, —
A baseless hope, a glad presentiment,
That curves the lip more softly, fills the eye
With more indulgent beam. And so it soothes,
So gently sways the pulses of the crowd
Who make a zone about the central spot
Chosen by Roldan for his theatre.
Maids with arched eyebrows, delicate-pencilled, dark,
Fold their round arms below the kerchief full;
Men shoulder little girls; and grandames gray,

But muscular still, hold babies on their arms;
While mothers keep the stout-legged boys in front
Against their skirts, as old Greek pictures show
The Glorious Mother with the Boy divine.
Youths keep the places for themselves, and roll
Large lazy eyes, and call recumbent dogs
(For reasons deep below the reach of thought).
The old men cough with purpose, wish to hint
Wisdom within that cheapens jugglery,
Maintain a neutral air, and knit their brows
In observation. None are quarrelsome,
Noisy, or very merry; for their blood
Moves slowly into fervour, — they rejoice
Like those dark birds that sweep with heavy wing,
Cheering their mates with melancholy cries.

But now the gilded balls begin to play
In rhythmic numbers, ruled by practice fine
Of eye and muscle: all the juggler's form
Consents harmonious in swift-gliding change,
Easily forward stretched or backward bent
With lightest step and movement circular
Round a fixed point: 't is not the old Roldan
now,
The dull, hard, weary, miserable man,
The soul all parched to languid appetite
And memory of desire: 't is wondrous force
That moves in combination multiform
Towards conscious ends: 't is Roldan glorious
Holding all eyes like any meteor,
King of the moment save when Annibal
Divides the scene and plays the comic part,
Gazing with blinking glances up and down,
Dancing and throwing naught and catching it,
With mimicry as merry as the tasks
Of penance-working shades in Tartarus.

Pablo stands passive, and a space apart,
Holding a viol, waiting for command.
Music must not be wasted, but must rise
As needed climax; and the audience
Is growing with late comers. Juan now,
And the familiar Host, with Blasco broad,
Find way made gladly to the inmost round
Studded with heads. Lorenzo knits the crowd
Into one family by showing all
Good-will and recognition. Juan casts
His large and rapid-measuring glance around;
But — with faint quivering, transient as a breath
Shaking a flame — his eyes make sudden pause
Where by the jutting angle of a street
Castle-ward leading, stands a female form,
A kerchief pale square-drooping o'er the brow,
About her shoulders dim brown serge, — in garb
Most like a peasant-woman from the vale,
Who might have lingered after marketing
To see the show. What thrill mysterious,
Ray-borne from orb to orb of conscious eyes,
The swift observing sweep of Juan's glance
Arrests an instant, then with prompting fresh
Diverts it lastingly? He turns at once
To watch the gilded balls, and nod and smile
At little round Pepíta, blondest maid
In all Bedmár, — Pepíta, fair yet flecked,
Saucy of lip and nose, of hair as red
As breasts of robins stepping on the snow, —
Who stands in front with little tapping feet,
And baby-dimpled hands that hide enclosed
Those sleeping crickets, the dark castanets.
But soon the gilded balls have ceased to play,
And Annibal is leaping through the hoops
That turn to twelve, meeting him as he flies
In the swift circle. Shuddering he leaps,

But with each spring flies swift and swifter still
To loud and louder shouts, while the great hoops
Are changed to smaller. Now the crowd is fired.
The motion swift, the living victim urged,
The imminent failure and repeated scape
Hurry all pulses and intoxicate
With subtle wine of passion many-mixt.
'T is all about a monkey leaping hard
Till near to gasping; but it serves as well
As the great circus or arena dire,
Where these are lacking. Roldan cautiously
Slackens the leaps and lays the hoops to rest,
And Annibal retires with reeling brain
And backward stagger, — pity, he could not
smile!
Now Roldan spreads his carpet, now he shows
Strange metamorphoses: the pebble black
Changes to whitest egg within his hand;
A staring rabbit, with retreating ears,
Is swallowed by the air and vanishes;
He tells men's thoughts about the shaken dice,
Their secret choosings; makes the white beans pass
With causeless act sublime from cup to cup
Turned empty on the ground, — diablerie
That pales the girls and puzzles all the boys:
These tricks are samples, hinting to the town
Roldan's great mastery. He tumbles next,
And Annibal is called to mock each feat
With arduous comicality and save
By rule romantic the great public mind
(And Roldan's body) from too serious strain.

But with the tumbling, lest the feats should fail,
And so need veiling in a haze of sound,
Pablo awakes the viol and the bow, —
The masculine bow that draws the woman's heart

From out the strings and makes them cry, yearn,
plead,
Tremble, exult, with mystic union
Of joy acute and tender suffering.
To play the viol and discreetly mix
Alternate with the bow's keen biting tones
The throb responsive to the finger's touch,
Was rarest skill that Pablo half had caught
From an old blind and wandering Catalan;
The other half was rather heritage
From treasure stored by generations past
In winding chambers of receptive sense.
The wingéd sounds exalt the thick-pressed crowd
With a new pulse in common, blending all
The gazing life into one larger soul
With dimly widened consciousness: as waves
In heightened movement tell of waves far off.
And the light changes; westward stationed clouds,
The sun's ranged outposts, luminous message
spread,
Rousing quiescent things to doff their shade
And show themselves as added audience.
Now Pablo, letting fall the eager bow,
Solicits softer murmurs from the strings,
And now above them pours a wondrous voice
(Such as Greek reapers heard in Sicily)
With wounding rapture in it, like love's arrows;
And clear upon clear air as coloured gems
Dropped in a crystal cup of water pure,
Fall words of sadness, simple, lyrical:

Spring comes hither,
Buds the rose;
Roses wither,
Sweet spring goes.
Ojalá, would she carry me!

Summer soars,—
Wide-winged day
White light pours,
Flies away.
Ojalá, would he carry me!

Soft winds blow,
Westward born,
Onward go
Toward the morn.
Ojalá, would they carry me!

Sweet birds sing
O'er the graves,
Then take wing
O'er the waves.
Ojalá, would they carry me!

When the voice paused and left the viol's note
To plead forsaken, 't was as when a cloud,
Hiding the sun, makes all the leaves and flowers
Shiver. But when with measured change the strings
Had taught regret new longing, clear again,
Welcome as hope recovered, flowed the voice.

Warm whispering through the slender olive leaves
Came to me a gentle sound,
Whispering of a secret found
In the clear sunshine 'mid the golden sheaves:
Said it was sleeping for me in the morn,
Called it gladness, called it joy,
Drew me on — "Come hither, boy" —
To where the blue wings rested on the corn.
I thought the gentle sound had whispered true,—
Thought the little heaven mine,
Leaned to clutch the thing divine,
And saw the blue wings melt within the blue.

The long notes linger on the trembling air,
With subtle penetration enter all
The myriad corridors of the passionate soul,
Message-like spread, and answering action rouse.
Not angular jigs that warm the chilly limbs
In hoary northern mists, but action curved
To soft andante strains pitched plaintively.
Vibrations sympathetic stir all limbs:
Old men live backward in their dancing prime,
And move in memory; small legs and arms
With pleasant agitation purposeless
Go up and down like pretty fruits in gales.
All long in common for the expressive act
Yet wait for it; as in the olden time
Men waited for the bard to tell their thought.
"The dance! the dance!" is shouted all around.
Now Pablo lifts the bow, Pepíta now,
Ready as bird that sees the sprinkled corn,
When Juan nods and smiles, puts forth her foot
And lifts her arm to wake the castanets.
Juan advances, too, from out the ring
And bends to quit his lute; for now the scene
Is empty; Roldan, weary, gathers pence,
Followed by Annibal with purse and stick.
The carpet lies a coloured isle untrod,
Inviting feet: "The dance, the dance," resounds,
The bow entreats with slow melodic strain,
And all the air with expectation yearns.

Sudden, with gliding motion like a flame
That through dim vapour makes a path of glory,
A figure lithe, all white and saffron-robed,
Flashed right across the circle, and now stood
With ripened arms uplift and regal head,
Like some tall flower whose dark and intense heart

Lies half within a tulip-tinted cup.
Juan stood fixed and pale; Pepíta stepped
Backward within the ring: the voices fell
From shouts insistent to more passive tones
Half meaning welcome, half astonishment.
"Lady Fedalma! — will she dance for us?"

But she, sole swayed by impulse passionate,
Feeling all life was music and all eyes
The warming, quickening light that music makes,
Moved as, in dance religious, Miriam,
When on the Red Sea shore she raised her voice,
And led the chorus of her people's joy;
Or as the Trojan maids that reverent sang
Watching the sorrow-crownéd Hecuba:
Moved in slow curves voluminous, gradual,
Feeling and action flowing into one,
In Eden's natural taintless marriage-bond;
Ardently modest, sensuously pure,
With young delight that wonders at itself
And throbs as innocent as opening flowers,
Knowing not comment, — soilless, beautiful.
The spirit in her gravely glowing face
With sweet community informs her limbs,
Filling their fine gradation with the breath
Of virgin majesty; as full vowelled words
Are new impregnate with the master's thought.
Even the chance-strayed delicate tendrils black,
That backward 'scape from out her wreathing
hair, —
Even the pliant folds that cling transverse
When with obliquely soaring bend altern
She seems a goddess quitting earth again —
Gather expression — a soft undertone
And resonance exquisite from the grand chord
Of her harmoniously bodied soul.

At first a reverential silence guards
The eager senses of the gazing crowd:
They hold their breath, and live by seeing her.
But soon the admiring tension finds relief, —
Sighs of delight, applausive murmurs low,
And stirrings gentle as of earéd corn
Or seed-bent grasses, when the ocean's breath
Spreads landward. Even Juan is impelled
By the swift-travelling movement: fear and doubt
Give way before the hurrying energy;
He takes his lute and strikes in fellowship,
Filling more full the rill of melody
Raised ever and anon to clearest flood
By Pablo's voice, that dies away too soon,
Like the sweet blackbird's fragmentary chant,
Yet wakes again, with varying rise and fall,
In songs that seem emergent memories
Prompting brief utterance, — little cancións
And villancicos, Andalusia-born.

PABLO (*sings*)

It was in the prime
Of the sweet Spring-time.
In the linnet's throat
Trembled the love-note,
And the love-stirred air
Thrilled the blossoms there.
Little shadows danced
Each a tiny elf,
Happy in large light
And the thinnest self.

It was but a minute
In a far-off Spring,
But each gentle thing,
Sweetly-wooing linnet,

Soft-thrilled hawthorn-tree,
Happy shadowy elf
With the thinnest self,
Live still on in me.
Oh, the sweet, sweet prime
Of the past Spring-time!

And still the light is changing: high above
Float soft pink clouds; others with deeper flush
Stretch like flamingoes bending toward the south.
Comes a more solemn brilliance o'er the sky,
A meaning more intense upon the air, —
The inspiration of the dying day.
And Juan now, when Pablo's notes subside,
Soothes the regretful ear, and breaks the pause
With masculine voice in deep antiphony.

JUAN (*sings*)

Day is dying! Float, O song,
Down the westward river,
Requiem chanting to the Day, —
Day, the mighty Giver.

Pierced by shafts of Time he bleeds
Melted rubies sending
Through the river and the sky,
Earth and heaven blending;

All the long-drawn earthly banks
Up to cloud-land lifting:
Slow between them drifts the swan,
'Twixt two heavens drifting.

Wings half open, like a flow'r
Inly deeper flushing,
Neck and breast as virgin's pure, —
Virgin proudly blushing.

Day is dying! Float, O swan,
Down the ruby river;
Follow, song, in requiem
To the mighty Giver.

The exquisite hour, the ardour of the crowd,
The strains more plenteous, and the gathering
might
Of action passionate where no effort is,
But self's poor gates open to rushing power
That blends the inward ebb and outward vast, —
All gathering influences culminate
And urge Fedalma. Earth and heaven seem one,
Life a glad trembling on the outer edge
Of unknown rapture. Swifter now she moves,
Filling the measure with a double beat
And widening circle; now she seems to glow
With more declaréd presence, glorified.
Circling, she lightly bends and lifts on high
The multitudinous-sounding tambourine,
And makes it ring and boom, then lifts it higher
Stretching her left arm beauteous; now the crowd
Exultant shouts, forgetting poverty
In the rich moment of possessing her.

But sudden, at one point, the exultant throng
Is pushed and hustled, and then thrust apart:
Something approaches, — something cuts the ring
Of jubilant idlers, — startling as a streak
From alien wounds across the blooming flesh
Of careless sporting childhood. 'T is the band
Of Gypsy prisoners. Soldiers lead the van
And make sparse flanking guard, aloof surveyed
By gallant Lopez, stringent in command.
The Gypsies chained in couples, all save one,
Walk in dark file with grand bare legs and arms

And savage melancholy in their eyes
That star-like gleam from out black clouds of hair:
Now they are full in sight, and now they stretch
Right to the centre of the open space.
Fedalma now, with gentle wheeling sweep
Returning, like the loveliest of the Hours
Strayed from her sisters, truant lingering,
Faces again the centre, swings again
The uplifted tambourine . . .
When lo! with sound
Stupendous throbbing, solemn as a voice
Sent by the invisible choir of all the dead,
Tolls the great passing bell that calls to prayer
For souls departed: at the mighty beat
It seems the light sinks awe-struck, — 't is the note
Of the sun's burial; speech and action pause;
Religious silence and the holy sign
Of everlasting memories (the sign
Of death that turned to more diffusive life)
Pass o'er the Plaça. Little children gaze
With lips apart, and feel the unknown god;
And the most men and women pray. Not all.
The soldiers pray; the Gypsies stand unmoved
As pagan statues with proud level gaze.
But he who wears a solitary chain
Heading the file, has turned to face Fedalma.
She motionless, with arm uplifted, guards
The tambourine aloft (lest, sudden-lowered,
Its trivial jingle mar the duteous pause),
Reveres the general prayer, but prays not, stands
With level glance meeting that Gypsy's eyes,
That seem to her the sadness of the world
Rebuking her, the great bell's hidden thought
Now first unveiled, — the sorrows unredeemed
Of races outcast, scorned, and wandering.
Why does he look at her? why she at him?

As if the meeting light between their eyes
Made permanent union? His deep-knit brow,
Inflated nostril, scornful lip compressed,
Seem a dark hieroglyph of coming fate
Written before her. Father Isidor
Had terrible eyes, and was her enemy;
She knew it and defied him; all her soul
Rounded and hardened in its separateness
When they encountered. But this prisoner, —
This Gypsy, passing, gazing casually, —
Was he her enemy too? She stood all quelled,
The impetuous joy that hurried in her veins
Seemed backward rushing turned to chillest awe,
Uneasy wonder, and a vague self-doubt.
The minute brief stretched measureless, dream-
filled
By a dilated new-fraught consciousness.

Now it was gone; the pious murmur ceased,
The Gypsies all moved onward at command
And careless noises blent confusedly.
But the ring closed again, and many ears
Waited for Pablo's music, many eyes
Turned towards the carpet: it lay bare and dim,
Twilight was there, — the bright Fedalma gone.

A handsome room in the Castle. On a table a rich jewel-casket.

Silva had dropped his mail and with it all
The heavier harness of his warlike cares.
He had not seen Fedalma; miser-like
He hoarded through the hour a costlier joy
By longing oft-repressed. Now it was earned;
And with observance wonted he would send
To ask admission. Spanish gentlemen
Who wooed fair dames of noble ancestry

Did homage with rich tunics and slashed sleeves
And outward-surging linen's costly snow;
With broidered scarf transverse, and rosary
Handsomely wrought to fit high-blooded prayer;
So hinting in how deep respect they held
That self they threw before their lady's feet.
And Silva — that Fedalma's rate should stand
No jot below the highest, that her love
Might seem to all the royal gift it was —
Turned every trifle in his mien and garb
To scrupulous language, uttering to the world
That since she loved him he went carefully,
Bearing a thing so precious in his hand.
A man of high-wrought strain, fastidious
In his acceptance, dreading all delight
That speedy dies and turns to carrion:
His senses much exacting, deep instilled
With keen imagination's difficult needs; —
Like strong-limbed monsters studded o'er with eyes,
Their hunger checked by overwhelming vision,
Or that fierce lion in symbolic dream
Snatched from the ground by wings and new-endowed
With a man's thought-propelled relenting heart.
Silva was both the lion and the man;
First hesitating shrank, then fiercely sprang,
Or having sprung, turned pallid at his deed
And loosed the prize, paying his blood for naught.
A nature half-transformed, with qualities
That oft bewrayed each other, elements
Not blent but struggling, breeding strange effects,
Passing the reckoning of his friends or foes.
Haughty and generous, grave and passionate;
With tidal moments of devoutest awe,
Sinking anon to furthest ebb of doubt;

Deliberating ever, till the sting
Of a recurrent ardour made him rush
Right against reasons that himself had drilled
And marshalled painfully. A spirit framed
Too proudly special for obedience,
Too subtly pondering for mastery:
Born of a goddess with a mortal sire,
Heir of flesh-fettered, weak divinity,
Doom-gifted with long resonant consciousness
And perilous heightening of the sentient soul.
But look less curiously: life itself
May not express us all, may leave the worst
And the best too, like tunes in mechanism
Never awaked. In various catalogues
Objects stand variously. Silva stands
As a young Spaniard, handsome, noble, brave,
With titles many, high in pedigree;
Or, as a nature quiveringly poised
In reach of storms, whose qualities may turn
To murdered virtues that still walk as ghosts
Within the shuddering soul and shriek remorse;
Or, as a lover . . . In the screening time
Of purple blossoms when the petals crowd
And softly crush like cherub cheeks in heaven,
Who thinks of greenly withered fruit and worms?
Oh the warm southern spring is beauteous!
And in love's spring all good seems possible:
No threats, all promise, brooklets ripple full
And bathe the rushes, vicious crawling things
Are pretty eggs, the sun shines graciously
And parches not, the silent rain beats warm
As childhood's kisses, days are young and grow,
And earth seems in its sweet beginning time
Fresh made for two who live in Paradise.
Silva is in love's spring, its freshness breathed
Within his soul along the dusty ways

While marching homeward; 't is around him now
As in a garden fenced in for delight, —
And he may seek delight. Smiling he lifts
A whistle from his belt, but lets it fall
Ere it has reached his lips, jarred by the sound
Of ushers' knocking, and a voice that craves
Admission for the Prior of San Domingo.

PRIOR (*entering*)

You look perturbed, my son. I thrust myself
Between you and some beckoning intent
That wears a face more smiling than my own.

DON SILVA

Father, enough that you are here. I wait,
As always, your commands, — nay, should have sought
An early audience.

PRIOR

To give, I trust,
Good reasons for your change of policy?

DON SILVA

Strong reasons, father.

PRIOR

Ay, but are they good?
I have known reasons strong, but strongly evil.

DON SILVA

'T is possible. I but deliver mine
To your strict judgment. Late despatches sent
With urgence by the Count of Bavien,

No hint on my part prompting, with besides
The testified concurrence of the king
And our Grand Master, have made peremptory
The course which else had been but rational.
Without the forces furnished by allies
The siege of Guadix would be madness. More,
El Zagal has his eyes upon Bedmár:
Let him attempt it: in three weeks from hence
The Master and the Lord of Aguilar
Will bring their forces. We shall catch the Moors,
The last gleaned clusters of their bravest men,
As in a trap. You have my reasons, father.

PRIOR

And they sound well. But free-tongued rumour adds
A pregnant supplement, — in substance this:
That inclination snatches arguments
To make indulgence seem judicious choice;
That you, commanding in God's Holy War,
Lift prayers to Satan to retard the fight
And give you time for feasting, — wait a siege,
Call daring enterprise impossible,
Because you 'd marry! You, a Spanish duke,
Christ's general, would marry like a clown,
Who, selling fodder dearer for the war,
Is all the merrier; nay, like the brutes,
Who know no awe to check their appetite,
Coupling 'mid heaps of slain, while still in front
The battle rages.

DON SILVA

Rumour on your lips
Is eloquent, father.

PRIOR

Is she true?

DON SILVA

Perhaps.
I seek to justify my public acts
And not my private joy. Before the world
Enough if I am faithful in command,
Betray not by my deeds, swerve from no task
My knightly vows constrain me to: herein
I ask all men to test me.

PRIOR

Knightly vows?
Is it by their constraint that you must marry?

DON SILVA

Marriage is not a breach of them. I use
A sanctioned liberty . . . your pardon, father,
I need not teach you what the Church decrees.
But facts may weaken texts, and so dry up
The fount of eloquence. The Church relaxed
Our Order's rule before I took the vows.

PRIOR

Ignoble liberty! you snatch your rule
From what God tolerates, not what he loves? —
Inquire what lowest offering may suffice,
Cheapen it meanly to an obolus,
Buy, and then count the coin left in your purse
For your debauch? — Measure obedience
By scantest powers of feeble brethren
Whom Holy Church indulges? — Ask great Law,
The rightful Sovereign of the human soul,

For what it pardons, not what it commands?
Oh fallen knighthood, penitent of high vows,
Asking a charter to degrade itself!
Such poor apology of rules relaxed
Blunts not suspicion of that doubleness
Your enemies tax you with.

DON SILVA

Oh, for the rest,
Conscience is harder than our enemies,
Knows more, accuses with more nicety,
Nor needs to question Rumour if we fall
Below the perfect model of our thought.
I fear no outward arbiter. — You smile?

PRIOR

Ay, at the contrast 'twixt your portraiture
And the true image of your conscience, shown
As now I see it in your acts. I see
A drunken sentinel who gives alarm
At his own shadow, but when scalers snatch
His weapon from his hand smiles idiot-like
At games he 's dreaming of.

DON SILVA

A parable!
The husk is rough, — holds something bitter, doubtless.

PRIOR

Oh, the husk gapes with meaning over-ripe.
You boast a conscience that controls your deeds,
Watches your knightly armour, guards your rank
From stain of treachery, — you, helpless slave,

Whose will lies nerveless in the clutch of lust, —
Of blind mad passion, — passion itself most helpless,
Storm-driven, like the monsters of the sea.
Oh famous conscience!

DON SILVA

Pause there! Leave unsaid
Aught that will match that text. More were too much,
Even from holy lips. I own no love
But such as guards my honour, since it guards
Hers whom I love! I suffer no foul words
To stain the gift I lay before her feet;
And, being hers, my honour is more safe.

PRIOR

Verse-makers' talk! fit for a world of rhymes,
Where facts are feigned to tickle idle ears,
Where good and evil play at tournament
And end in amity, — a world of lies, —
A carnival of words where every year
Stale falsehoods serve fresh men. Your honour safe?
What honour has a man with double bonds?
Honour is shifting as the shadows are
To souls that turn their passions into laws.
A Christian knight who weds an infidel . . .

DON SILVA (*fiercely*)

An infidel!

PRIOR

May one day spurn the Cross,
And call that honour! — one day find his sword

Stained with his brother's blood, and call that
honour!
Apostates' honour? — harlots' chastity!
Renegades' faithfulness? — Iscariot's!

DON SILVA

Strong words and burning; but they scorch not me.
Fedalma is a daughter of the Church, —
Has been baptized and nurtured in the faith.

PRIOR

Ay, as a thousand Jewesses, who yet
Are brides of Satan in a robe of flames.

DON SILVA

Fedalma is no Jewess, bears no marks
That tell of Hebrew blood.

PRIOR

She bears the marks
Of races unbaptized, that never bowed
Before the holy signs, were never moved
By stirrings of the sacramental gifts.

DON SILVA (*scornfully*)

Holy accusers practise palmistry,
And, other witness lacking, read the skin.

PRIOR

I read a record deeper than the skin.
What! Shall the trick of nostrils and of lips
Descend through generations, and the soul
That moves within our frame like God in worlds —

Convulsing, urging, melting, withering —
Imprint no record, leave no documents,
Of her great history? Shall men bequeath
The fancies of their palate to their sons,
And shall the shudder of restraining awe,
The slow-wept tears of contrite memory,
Faith's prayerful labour, and the food divine
Of fasts ecstatic, — shall these pass away
Like wind upon the waters, tracklessly?
Shall the mere curl of eyelashes remain
And god-enshrining symbols leave no trace
Of tremors reverent? — That maiden's blood
Is as unchristian as the leopard's.

DON SILVA

Say,
Unchristian as the Blessed Virgin's blood
Before the angel spoke the word, "All hail!"

PRIOR (*smiling bitterly*)

Say I not truly? See, your passion weaves
Already blasphemies!

DON SILVA

'T is you provoke them.

PRIOR

I strive, as still the Holy Spirit strives,
To move the will perverse. But, failing this,
God commands other means to save our blood,
To save Castilian glory, — nay, to save
The name of Christ from blot of traitorous deeds.

DON SILVA

Of traitorous deeds! Age, kindred, and your cowl
Give an ignoble license to your tongue.
As for your threats, fulfil them at your peril.
'T is you, not I, will gibbet our great name
To rot in infamy. If I am strong
In patience now, trust me, I can be strong
Then in defiance.

PRIOR

Miserable man!
Your strength will turn to anguish, like the strength
Of fallen angels. Can you change your blood?
You are a Christian, with the Christian awe
In every vein. A Spanish noble, born
To serve your people and your people's faith.
Strong, are you? Turn your back upon the Cross, —
Its shadow is before you. Leave your place:
Quit the great ranks of knighthood: you will walk
Forever with a tortured double self,
A self that will be hungry while you feast,
Will blush with shame while you are glorified,
Will feel the ache and chill of desolation,
Even in the very bosom of your love.
Mate yourself with this woman, fit for what?
To make the sport of Moorish palaces
A lewd Herodias . . .

DON SILVA

Stop! no other man,
Priest though he were, had had his throat left free
For passage of those words. I would have clutched
His serpent's neck, and flung him out to hell!
A monk must needs defile the name of love:

He knows it but as tempting devils paint it.
You think to scare my love from its resolve
With arbitrary consequences, strained
By rancorous effort from the thinnest motes
Of possibility? — cite hideous lists
Of sins irrelevant, to frighten me
With bugbears' names, as women fright a child?
Poor pallid wisdom, taught by inference
From blood-drained life, where phantom terrors rule,
And all achievement is to leave undone!
Paint the day dark, make sunshine cold to me,
Abolish the earth's fairness, prove it all
A fiction of my eyes, — then, after that,
Profane Fedalma.

PRIOR

Oh, there is no need:
She has profaned herself. Go, raving man,
And see her dancing now. Go, see your bride
Flaunting her beauties grossly in the gaze
Of vulgar idlers, — eking out the show
Made in the Plaça by a mountebank.
I hinder you no further.

DON SILVA

It is false!

PRIOR

Go, prove it false, then.

[Father Isidor
Drew on his cowl and turned away. The face
That flashed anathemas, in swift eclipse
Seemed Silva's vanished confidence. In haste

He rushed unsignalled through the corridor
To where the Duchess once, Fedalma now,
Had residence retired from din of arms, —
Knocked, opened, found all empty, — said
With muffled voice, "Fedalma!" — called more
loud,
More oft on Iñez, the old trusted nurse, —
Then searched the terrace-garden, calling still,
But heard no answering sound, and saw no face
Save painted faces staring all unmoved
By agitated tones. He hurried back,
Giving half-conscious orders as he went
To page and usher, that they straight should seek
Lady Fedalma; then with stinging shame
Wished himself silent; reached again the room
Where still the Father's menace seemed to hang
Thickening the air; snatched cloak and pluméd
hat,
And grasped, not knowing why, his poniard's hilt;
Then checked himself and said: —]

If he spoke truth!
To know were wound enough, — to see the truth
Were fire upon the wound. It must be false!
His hatred saw amiss, or snatched mistake
In other men's report. I am a fool!
But where can she be gone? gone secretly?
And in my absence? Oh, she meant no wrong!
I am a fool! — But where can she be gone?
With only Iñez? Oh, she meant no wrong!
I swear she never meant it. There 's no wrong
But she would make it momentary right
By innocence in doing it. . . .
And yet,
What is our certainty? Why, knowing all
That is not secret. Mighty confidence!

One pulse of Time makes the base hollow, — sends
The towering certainty we built so high
Toppling in fragments meaningless. What is —
What will be — must be — pooh! they wait the key
Of that which is not yet; all other keys
Are made of our conjectures, take their sense
From humours fooled by hope, or by despair.
Know what is good? Oh God, we know not yet
If bliss itself is not young misery
With fangs swift growing. . . .
But some outward harm
May even now be hurting, grieving her.
Oh, I must search, — face shame, — if shame be there.
Here, Perez! hasten to Don Alvar, — tell him
Lady Fedalma must be sought, — is lost, —
Has met, I fear, some mischance. He must send
Towards divers points. I go myself to seek
First in the town. . . .

[As Perez oped the door,
Then moved aside for passage of the Duke,
Fedalma entered, cast away the cloud
Of serge and linen, and, outbeaming bright,
Advanced a pace towards Silva, — but then paused,
For he had started and retreated; she,
Quick and responsive as the subtle air
To change in him, divined that she must wait
Until they were alone: they stood and looked.
Within the Duke was struggling confluence
Of feelings manifold, — pride, anger, dread,
Meeting in stormy rush with sense secure
That she was present, with the satisfied thirst
Of gazing love, with trust inevitable
As in beneficent virtues of the light
And all earth's sweetness. that Fedalma's soul

Was free from blemishing purpose. Yet proud wrath
Leaped in dark flood above the purer stream
That strove to drown it: Anger seeks its prey, —
Something to tear with sharp-edged tooth and claw,
Likes not to go off hungry, leaving Love
To feast on milk and honeycomb at will.
Silva's heart said, he must be happy soon,
She being there; but to be happy, — first
He must be angry, having cause. Yet love
Shot like a stifled cry of tenderness
All through the harshness he would fain have given
To the dear word,]

DON SILVA

Fedalma!

FEDALMA

O my Lord!
You are come back, and I was wandering!

DON SILVA (*coldly, but with suppressed agitation*)

You meant I should be ignorant.

FEDALMA

Oh no,
I should have told you after, — not before,
Lest you should hinder me.

DON SILVA

Then my known wish
Can make no hindrance?

FEDALMA (*archly*)

That depends
On what the wish may be. You wished me once
Not to uncage the birds. I meant to obey:
But in a moment something — something stronger
Forced me to let them out. It did no harm.
They all came back again, — the silly birds!
I told you, after.

DON SILVA (*with haughty coldness*)

Will you tell me now
What was the prompting stronger than my wish
That made you wander?

FEDALMA (*advancing a step towards him, with a sudden look of anxiety*)

Are you angry?

DON SILVA (*smiling bitterly*)

Angry?
A man deep-wounded may feel too much pain
To feel much anger.

FEDALMA (*still more anxiously*)

You — deep-wounded?

DON SILVA

Yes!
Have I not made your place and dignity
The very heart of my ambition? You, —
No enemy could do it, — you alone
Can strike it mortally.

FEDALMA

Nay, Silva, nay.
Has some one told you false? I only went
To see the world with Iñez, — see the town,
The people, everything. It was no harm.
I did not mean to dance: it happened so
At last . . .

DON SILVA

O God, it 's true, then! — true that you,
A maiden nurtured as rare flowers are,
The very air of heaven sifted fine
Lest any mote should mar your purity,
Have flung yourself out on the dusty way
For common eyes to see your beauty soiled!
You own it true, — you danced upon the Plaça?

FEDALMA (*proudly*)

Yes, it is true. I was not wrong to dance.
The air was filled with music, with a song
That seemed the voice of the sweet eventide, —
The glowing light entering through eye and ear, —
That seemed our love, — mine, yours, — they are
but one, —
Trembling through all my limbs, as fervent words
Tremble within my soul and must be spoken.
And all the people felt a common joy
And shouted for the dance. A brightness soft
As of the angels moving down to see
Illumined the broad space. The joy, the life
Around, within me, were one heaven: I longed
To blend them visibly: I longed to dance
Before the people, — be as mounting flame
To all that burned within them! Nay, I danced;

There was no longing: I but did the deed
Being moved to do it.

(*As* FEDALMA *speaks, she and* DON SILVA *are gradually drawn nearer to each other.*)

Oh, I seemed new-waked
To life in unison with a multitude, —
Feeling my soul upborne by all their souls,
Floating within their gladness! Soon I lost
All sense of separateness: Fedalma died
As a star dies, and melts into the light.
I was not, but joy was, and love and triumph.
Nay, my dear lord, I never could do aught
But I must feel you present. And once done,
Why, you must love it better than your wish.
I pray you, say so, — say, it was not wrong!

(*While* FEDALMA *has been making this last appeal, they have gradually come close together, and at last embrace.*)

DON SILVA (*holding her hands*)

Dangerous rebel! if the world without
Were pure as that within . . . but 't is a book
Wherein you only read the poesy
And miss all wicked meanings. Hence the need
For trust — obedience — call it what you will —
Towards him whose life will be your guard, —
towards me
Who now am soon to be your husband.

FEDALMA

Yes!
That very thing that when I am your wife
I shall be something different, — shall be
I know not what, a duchess with new thoughts, —

For nobles never think like common men,
Nor wives like maidens (oh, you wot not yet
How much I note, with all my ignorance), —
That very thing has made me more resolve
To have my will before I am your wife.
How can the Duchess ever satisfy
Fedalma's unwed eyes? and so to-day
I scolded Iñez till she cried and went.

DON SILVA

It was a guilty weakness: she knows well
That since you pleaded to be left more free
From tedious tendance and control of dames
Whose rank matched better with your destiny,
Her charge — my trust — was weightier.

FEDALMA

Nay, my lord,
You must not blame her, dear old nurse. She cried.
Why, you would have consented too, at last.
I said such things! I was resolved to go,
And see the streets, the shops, the men at work,
The women, little children, — everything,
Just as it is when nobody looks on.
And I have done it! We were out four hours.
I feel so wise.

DON SILVA

Had you but seen the town,
You innocent naughtiness, not shown yourself, —
Shown yourself dancing, — you bewilder me! —
Frustrate my judgment with strange negatives
That seem like poverty, and yet are wealth
In precious womanliness, beyond the dower
Of other women: wealth in virgin gold,

Outweighing all their petty currency.
You daring modesty! You shrink no more
From gazing men than from the gazing flowers
That, dreaming sunshine, open as you pass.

FEDALMA

No, I should like the world to look at me
With eyes of love that make a second day.
I think your eyes would keep the life in me
Though I had naught to feed on else. Their blue
Is better than the heavens', — hold more love
For me, Fedalma, — is a little heaven
For this one little world that looks up now.

DON SILVA

O precious little world! you make the heaven
As the earth makes the sky. But, dear, all eyes,
Though looking even on you, have not a glance
That cherishes . . .

FEDALMA

Ah no, I meant to tell you, —
Tell how my dancing ended with a pang.
There came a man, one among many more,
But *he* came first, with iron on his limbs.
And when the bell tolled, and the people prayed,
And I stood pausing, — then he looked at me.
O Silva, such a man! I thought he rose
From the dark place of long-imprisoned souls,
To say that Christ had never come to them.
It was a look to shame a seraph's joy
And make him sad in heaven. It found me there, —
Seemed to have travelled far to find me there
And grasp me, — claim this festal life of mine
As heritage of sorrow, chill my blood

With the cold iron of some unknown bonds.
The gladness hurrying full within my veins
Was sudden frozen, and I danced no more.
But seeing you let loose the stream of joy,
Mingling the present with the sweetest past.
Yet, Silva, still I see him. Who is he?
Who are those prisoners with him? Are they
Moors?

DON SILVA

No, they are Gypsies, strong and cunning knaves,
A double gain to us by the Moors' loss:
The man you mean — their chief — is an ally
The infidel will miss. His look might chase
A herd of monks, and make them fly more swift
Than from St. Jerome's lion. Such vague fear,
Such bird-like tremors when that savage glance
Turned full upon you in your height of joy
Was natural, was not worth emphasis.
Forget it, dear. This hour is worth whole days
When we are sundered. Danger urges us
To quick resolve.

FEDALMA

What danger? What resolve?
I never felt chill shadow in my heart
Until this sunset.

DON SILVA

A dark enmity
Plots how to sever us. And our defence
Is speedy marriage, secretly achieved,
Then publicly declared. Beseech you, dear,
Grant me this confidence; do my will in this,
Trusting the reasons why I overset

All my own airy building raised so high
Of bridal honours, marking when you step
From off your maiden throne to come to me
And bear the yoke of love. There is great need.
I hastened home, carrying this prayer to you
Within my heart. The bishop is my friend,
Furthers our marriage, holds in enmity —
Some whom we love not and who love not us.
By this night's moon our priest will be despatched
From Jaën. I shall march an escort strong
To meet him. Ere a second sun from this
Has risen — you consenting — we may wed.

FEDALMA

None knowing that we wed?

DON SILVA

Beforehand none
Save Iñez and Don Alvar. But the vows
Once safely binding us, my household all
Shall know you as their Duchess. No man then
Can aim a blow at you but through my breast,
And what stains you must stain our ancient name;
If any hate you I will take his hate
And wear it as a glove upon my helm;
Nay, God himself will never have the power
To strike you solely and leave me unhurt,
He having made us one. Now put the seal
Of your dear lips on that.

FEDALMA

A solemn kiss? —
Such as I gave you when you came that day
From Córdova, when first we said we loved?
When you had left the ladies of the court

For thirst to see me; and you told me so;
And then I seemed to know why I had lived.
I never knew before. A kiss like that?

DON SILVA

Yes, yes, you face divine! When was our kiss
Like any other?

FEDALMA

Nay, I cannot tell
What other kisses are. But that one kiss
Remains upon my lips. The angels, spirits,
Creatures with finer sense, may see it there.
And now another kiss that will not die,
Saying, To-morrow I shall be your wife!

(*They kiss, and pause a moment, looking earnestly in each other's eyes. Then* FEDALMA, *breaking away from* DON SILVA, *stands at a little distance from him with a look of roguish delight.*)

Now I am glad I saw the town to-day
Before I am a Duchess, — glad I gave
This poor Fedalma all her wish. For once,
Long years ago, I cried when Iñez said,
" You are no more a little girl; " I grieved
To part forever from that little girl
And all her happy world so near the ground.
It must be sad to outlive aught we love.
So I shall grieve a little for these days
Of poor unwed Fedalma. Oh, they are sweet,
And none will come just like them. Perhaps the wind
Wails so in winter for the summers dead,
And all sad sounds are nature's funeral cries
For what has been and is not. Are they, Silva?

(*She comes nearer to him again, and lays her hand on his arm, looking up at him with melancholy.*)

DON SILVA

Why, dearest, you began in merriment,
And end as sadly as a widowed bird.
Some touch mysterious has new-tuned your soul
To melancholy sequence. You soared high
In that wild flight of rapture when you danced,
And now you droop. 'T is arbitrary grief.
Surfeit of happiness, that mourns for loss
Of unwed love, which does but die like seed
For fuller harvest of our tenderness.
We in our wedded life shall know no loss.
We shall new-date our years. What went before
Will be the time of promise, shadows, dreams;
But this, full revelation of great love.
For rivers blent take in a broader heaven,
And we shall blend our souls. Away with grief!
When this dear head shall wear the double crown
Of wife and Duchess, — spiritually crowned
With sworn espousal before God and man, —
Visibly crowned with jewels that bespeak
The chosen sharer of my heritage, —
My love will gather perfectness, as thoughts
That nourish us to magnanimity
Grow perfect with more perfect utterance,
Gathering full-shapen strength. And then these gems,

(DON SILVA *draws* FEDALMA *towards the jewel-casket on the table, and opens it.*)

Helping the utterance of my soul's full choice,
Will be the words made richer by just use,
And have new meaning in their lustrousness.

You know these jewels; they are precious signs
Of long-transmitted honour, heightened still
By worthy wearing; and I give them you, —
Ask you to take them, — place our house's trust
In her sure keeping whom my heart has found
Worthiest, most beauteous. These rubies — see —
Were falsely placed if not upon your brow.

(FEDALMA, *while* DON SILVA *holds open the casket, bends over it, looking at the jewels with delight.*)

FEDALMA

Ah, I remember them. In childish days
I felt as if they were alive and breathed.
I used to sit with awe and look at them.
And now they will be mine! I 'll put them on.
Help me, my lord, and you shall see me now
Somewhat as I shall look at Court with you,
That we may know if I shall bear them well.
I have a fear sometimes: I think your love
Has never paused within your eyes to look,
And only passes through them into mine.
But when the Court is looking, and the queen,
Your eyes will follow theirs. Oh, if you saw
That I was other than you wished, — 't were death!

DON SILVA (*taking up a jewel and placing it against her ear*)

Nay, let us try. Take out your ear-ring, sweet.
This ruby glows with longing for your ear.

FEDALMA (*taking out her ear-rings, and then lifting up the other jewels, one by one*).

Pray, fasten in the rubies.

(Don Silva *begins to put in the ear-ring.*)

I was right!
These gems have life in them: their colours speak,
Say what words fail of. So do many things, —
The scent of jasmine, and the fountain's plash,
The moving shadows on the far-off hills,
The slanting moonlight and our clasping hands.
O Silva, there 's an ocean round our words
That overflows and drowns them. Do you know
Sometimes when we sit silent, and the air
Breathes gently on us from the orange-trees,
It seems that with the whisper of a word
Our souls must shrink, get poorer, more apart.
Is it not true?

Don Silva

Yes, dearest, it is true.
Speech is but broken light upon the depth
Of the unspoken: even your loved words
Float in the larger meaning of your voice
As something dimmer.

(*He is still trying in vain to fasten the second ear-ring, while she has stooped again over the casket.*)

Fedalma (*raising her head*)

Ah! your lordly hands
Will never fix that jewel. Let me try.
Women's small finger-tips have eyes.

Don Silva

No, no!
I like the task, only you must be still.

(*She stands perfectly still, clasping her hands together while he fastens the second ear-ring. Suddenly a clanking noise is heard without.*)

FEDALMA (*starting with an expression of pain*)

What is that sound? — that jarring cruel sound?
'T is there, — outside.

(*She tries to start away towards the window but* DON SILVA *detains her.*)

DON SILVA

Oh heed it not, it comes
From workmen in the outer gallery.

FEDALMA

It is the sound of fetters: sound of work
Is not so dismal. Hark, they pass along!
I know it is those Gypsy prisoners.
I saw them, heard their chains. Oh horrible,
To be in chains! Why, I with all my bliss
Have longed sometimes to fly and be at large,
Have felt imprisoned in my luxury
With servants for my jailers. O my lord,
Do you not wish the world were different?

DON SILVA

It will be different when this war has ceased.
You, wedding me, will make it different,
Making one life more perfect.

FEDALMA

That is true!
And I shall beg much kindness at your hands
For those who are less happy than ourselves. —
(*Brightening.*) Oh, I shall rule you! ask for many things
Before the world, which you will not deny
For very pride, lest men should say, " The Duke
Holds lightly by his Duchess; he repents
His humble choice."

(*She breaks away from him and returns to the jewels, taking up a necklace, and clasping it on her neck, while he takes a circlet of diamonds and rubies and raises it towards her head as he speaks.*)

DON SILVA

Doubtless, I shall persist
In loving you, to disappoint the world;
Out of pure obstinacy feel myself
Happiest of men. Now, take the coronet.

(*He places the circlet on her head.*)

The diamonds want more light. See, from this lamp
I can set tapers burning.

FEDALMA

Tell me, now,
When all these cruel wars are at an end,
And when we go to Court at Córdova,
Or Seville, or Toledo, — wait awhile,
I must be farther off for you to see,—

(*She retreats to a distance from him, and then advances slowly.*)

Now think (I would the tapers gave more light!)
If when you show me at the tournaments
Among the other ladies, they will say,
"Duke Silva is well matched. His bride was naught,
Was some poor foster-child, no man knows what;
Yet is her carriage noble, all her robes
Are worn with grace: she might have been well born."
Will they say so? Think now we are at Court,
And all eyes bent on me.

DON SILVA

Fear not, my Duchess!
Some knight who loves may say his lady-love
Is fairer, being fairest. None can say
Don Silva's bride might better fit her rank.
You will make rank seem natural as kind,
As eagle's plumage or the lion's might.
A crown upon your brow would seem God-made.

FEDALMA

Then I am glad! I shall try on to-night
The other jewels, — have the tapers lit,
And see the diamonds sparkle.

(*She goes to the casket again.*)

Here is gold, —
A necklace of pure gold, — most finely wrought.

(*She takes out a large gold necklace and holds it up before her, then turns to* DON SILVA.)

But this is one that you have worn, my lord?

DON SILVA

No, love, I never wore it. Lay it down.

(*He puts the necklace gently out of her hand, then joins both her hands and holds them up between his own.*)

You must not look at jewels any more,
But look at me.

FEDALMA (*looking up at him*)

O you dear heaven!
I should see naught if you were gone. 'T is true
My mind is too much given to gauds, — to things
That fetter thought within this narrow space.
That comes of fear.

DON SILVA

What fear?

FEDALMA

Fear of myself.
For when I walk upon the battlements
And see the river travelling toward the plain,
The mountains screening all the world beyond,
A longing comes that haunts me in my dreams, —
Dreams where I seem to spring from off the walls,
And fly far, far away, until at last
I find myself alone among the rocks,
Remember then that I have left you, — try
To fly back to you, — and my wings are gone!

DON SILVA

A wicked dream! If ever I left you,
Even in dreams, it was some demon dragged me,
And with fierce struggles I awaked myself.

FEDALMA

It is a hateful dream, and when it comes, —
I mean, when in my waking hours there comes
That longing to be free, I am afraid:
I run down to my chamber, plait my hair,
Weave colours in it, lay out all my gauds,
And in my mind make new ones prettier.
You see I have two minds, and both are foolish.
Sometimes a torrent rushing through my soul
Escapes in wild strange wishes; presently,
It dwindles to a little babbling rill
And plays among the pebbles and the flowers.
Iñez will have it I lack broidery,
Says naught else gives content to noble maids.
But I have never broidered, — never will.
No, when I am a Duchess and a wife
I shall ride forth — may I not? — by your side.

DON SILVA

Yes, you shall ride upon a palfrey, black
To match Bavieca. Not Queen Isabel
Will be a sight more gladdening to men's eyes,
Than my dark queen Fedalma.

FEDALMA

Ah, but you,
You are my king, and I shall tremble still
With some great fear that throbs within my love.
Does your love fear?

DON SILVA

Ah, yes! all preciousness
To mortal hearts is guarded by a fear.
All love fears loss, and most that loss supreme.

Its own perfection, — seeing, feeling change
From high to lower, dearer to less dear.
Can love be careless? If we lost our love
What should we find? — with this sweet Past torn off,
Our lives deep scarred just where their beauty lay?
The best we found thenceforth were still a worse:
The only better is a Past that lives
On through an added Present, stretching still
In hope unchecked by shaming memories
To life's last breath. And so I tremble too
Before my queen Fedalma.

FEDALMA

That is just.
'T were hard of Love to make us women fear
And leave you bold. Yet Love is not quite even.
For feeble creatures, little birds and fawns,
Are shaken more by fear, while large strong things
Can bear it stoutly. So we women still
Are not well dealt with. Yet would I choose to be
Fedalma loving Silva. You, my lord,
Hold the worse share, since you must love poor me.
But is it what we love, or how we love,
That makes true good?

DON SILVA

O subtlety! for me
'T is what I love determines how I love.
The goddess with pure rites reveals herself
And makes pure worship.

FEDALMA

Do you worship me?

DON SILVA

Ay, with that best of worship which adores
Goodness adorable.

FEDALMA (*archly*)

Goodness obedient,
Doing your will, devoutest worshipper?

DON SILVA

Yes, — listening to this prayer. This very night
I shall go forth. And you will rise with day
And wait for me?

FEDALMA

Yes.

DON SILVA

I shall surely come.
And then we shall be married. Now I go
To audience fixed in Abderahman's tower.
Farewell, love! (*They embrace.*)

FEDALMA

Some chill dread possesses me!

DON SILVA

Oh, confidence has oft been evil augury,
So dread may hold a promise. Sweet, farewell!
I shall send tendance as I pass, to bear
This casket to your chamber. — One more kiss.
(*Exit.*)

FEDALMA (*when* DON SILVA *is gone, returning to the casket, and looking dreamily at the jewels*)

Yes, now that good seems less impossible!
Now it seems true that I shall be his wife,
Be ever by his side, and make a part
In all his purposes. . . .
These rubies greet me Duchess. How they glow!
Their prisoned souls are throbbing like my own.
Perchance they loved once, were ambitious, proud;
Or do they only dream of wider life,
Ache from intenseness, yearn to burst the wall
Compact of crystal splendour, and to flood
Some wider space with glory? Poor, poor gems!
We must be patient in our prison-house,
And find our space in loving. Pray you, love me.
Let us be glad together. And you, gold, —

(*She takes up the gold necklace.*)

You wondrous necklace, — will you love me too,
And be my amulet to keep me safe
From eyes that hurt?

(*She spreads out the necklace, meaning to clasp it on her neck. Then pauses, startled, holding it before her.*)

Why, it is magical!
He says he never wore it, — yet these lines, —
Nay, if he had, I should remember well
'T was he, no other. And these twisted lines, —
They seem to speak to me as writing would,
To bring a message from the dead, dead past.
What is their secret? Are they characters?
I never learned them; yet they stir some sense
That once I dreamed, — I have forgotten what.
Or was it life? Perhaps I lived before

In some strange world where first my soul was
shaped,
And all this passionate love, and joy, and pain,
That come, I know not whence, and sway my
deeds,
Are dim yet mastering memories, blind yet strong,
That this world stirs within me; as this chain
Stirs some strange certainty of visions gone,
And all my mind is as an eye that stares
Into the darkness painfully.

(*While* FEDALMA *has been looking at the necklace,* JUAN *has entered, and finding himself unobserved by her, says at last,*)

Señora!

FEDALMA *starts, and gathering the necklace together turns round* —

O Juan, it is you!

JUAN

I met the Duke, —
Had waited long without, no matter why, —
And when he ordered one to wait on you
And carry forth a burden you would give,
I prayed for leave to be the servitor.
Don Silva owes me twenty granted wishes
That I have never tendered, lacking aught
That I could wish for and a Duke could grant;
But this one wish to serve you, weighs as much
As twenty other longings.

FEDALMA (*smiling*)

That sounds well.
You turn your speeches prettily as songs.
But I will not forget the many days

You have neglected me. Your pupil learns
But little from you now. Her studies flag.
The Duke says, " That is idle Juan's way:
Poets must rove, — are honey-sucking birds
And know not constancy." Said he quite true?

JUAN

O lady, constancy has kind and rank.
One man's is lordly, plump, and bravely clad,
Holds its head high, and tells the world its name:
Another man's is beggared, must go bare,
And shiver through the world, the jest of all,
But that it puts the motley on, and plays
Itself the jester. But I see you hold
The Gypsy's necklace: it is quaintly wrought.

FEDALMA

The Gypsy's? Do you know its history?

JUAN

No further back than when I saw it taken
From off its wearer's neck, — the Gypsy chief's.

FEDALMA (*eagerly*)

What! he who paused, at tolling of the bell,
Before me in the Plaça?

JUAN

Yes, I saw
His look fixed on you.

FEDALMA

Know you aught of him?

JUAN

Something and nothing, — as I know the sky,
Or some great story of the olden time
That hides a secret. I have oft talked with him.
He seems to say much, yet is but a wizard
Who draws down rain by sprinkling; throws me out
Some pregnant text that urges comment; casts
A sharp-hooked question, baited with such skill
It needs must catch the answer.

FEDALMA

It is hard
That such a man should be a prisoner, —
Be chained to work.

JUAN

Oh, he is dangerous!
Granáda with this Zarca for a king
Might still maim Christendom. He is of those
Who steal the keys from snoring Destiny
And make the prophets lie. A Gypsy, too,
Suckled by hunted beasts, whose mother-milk
Has filled his veins with hate.

FEDALMA

I thought his eyes
Spoke not of hatred, — seemed to say he bore
The pain of those who never could be saved.
What if the Gypsies are but savage beasts
And must be hunted? — let them be set free,
Have benefit of chase, or stand at bay
And fight for life and offspring. Prisoners!
Oh, they have made their fires beside the streams,

Their walls have been the rocks, the pillared pines,
Their roof the living sky that breathes with light:
They may well hate a cage, like strong-winged
birds,
Like me, who have no wings, but only wishes.
I will beseech the Duke to set them free.

JUAN

Pardon me, lady, if I seem to warn,
Or try to play the sage. What if the Duke
Loved not to hear of Gypsies? if their name
Were poisoned for him once, being used amiss?
I speak not as of fact. Our nimble souls
Can spin an insubstantial universe
Suiting our mood, and call it possible,
Sooner than see one grain with eye exact
And give strict record of it. Yet by chance
Our fancies may be truth and make us seers.
'T is a rare teeming world, so harvest-full,
Even guessing ignorance may pluck some fruit.
Note what I say no further than will stead
The siege you lay. I would not seem to tell
Aught that the Duke may think and yet withhold:
It were a trespass in me.

FEDALMA

Fear not, Juan.
Your words bring daylight with them when you
speak.
I understand your care. But I am brave, —
Oh, and so cunning! — always I prevail.
Now, honoured Troubadour, if you will be
Your pupil's servant, bear this casket hence.

Nay, not the necklace: it is hard to place.
Pray go before me; Iñez will be there.
(*Exit* JUAN *with the casket.*)

FEDALMA (*looking again at the necklace*)

It is *his* past clings to you, not my own.
If we have each our angels, good and bad,
Fates, separate from ourselves, who act for us
When we are blind, or sleep, then this man's fate,
Hovering about the thing he used to wear,
Has laid its grasp on mine appealingly.
Dangerous, is he? — well, a Spanish knight
Would have his enemy strong, — defy, not bind him.
I can dare all things when my soul is moved
By something hidden that possesses me.
If Silva said this man must keep his chains
I should find ways to free him, — disobey
And free him as I did the birds. But no!
As soon as we are wed, I 'll put my prayer,
And he will not deny me: he is good.
Oh, I shall have much power as well as joy!
Duchess Fedalma may do what she will.

A Street by the Castle. JUAN *leans against a parapet, in moonlight, and touches his lute half unconsciously.* PEPÍTA *stands on tiptoe watching him, and then advances till her shadow falls in front of him. He looks towards her. A piece of white drapery thrown over her head catches the moonlight.*

JUAN

Ha! my Pepíta! see how thin and long
Your shadow is. 'T is so your ghost will be,
When you are dead.

PEPÍTA (*crossing herself*)

Dead! — Oh the blessed saints!
You would be glad, then, if Pepíta died?

JUAN

Glad! why? Dead maidens are not merry. Ghosts
Are doleful company. I like you living.

PEPÍTA

I think you like me not. I wish you did.
Sometimes you sing to me and make me dance.
Another time you take no heed of me,
Not though I kiss my hand to you and smile.
But Andrès would be glad if I kissed *him*.

JUAN

My poor Pepíta, I am old.

PEPÍTA

No, no.
You have no wrinkles.

JUAN

Yes, I have — within;
The wrinkles are within, my little bird.
Why, I have lived through twice a thousand years,
And kept the company of men whose bones
Crumbled before the blessed Virgin lived.

PEPÍTA (*crossing herself*)

Nay, God defend us, that is wicked talk!
You say it but to scorn me. (*With a sob.*) I will go.

JUAN

Stay, little pigeon. I am not unkind.
Come, sit upon the wall. Nay, never cry.
Give me your cheek to kiss. There, cry no more!

(PEPÍTA, *sitting on the low parapet, puts up her cheek to* JUAN, *who kisses it, putting his hand under her chin. She takes his hand and kisses it.*)

PEPÍTA

I like to kiss your hand. It is so good, —
So smooth and soft.

JUAN

Well, well, I 'll sing to you.

PEPÍTA

A pretty song, loving and merry?

JUAN

Yes.

(JUAN *sings*)

Memory,
Tell to me
What is fair,
Past compare,
In the land of Tubal?

Is it Spring's
Lovely things,
Blossoms white,
Rosy dight?
Then it is Pepíta.

Summer's crest
Red-gold tressed,
Corn-flowers peeping under? —
Idle noons,
Lingering moons,
Sudden cloud,
Lightning's shroud,
Sudden rain,
Quick again
Smiles where late was thunder? —

Are all these
Made to please?
So too is Pepíta.

Autumn's prime,
Apple-time,
Smooth cheek round,
Heart all sound? —
Is it this
You would kiss?
Then it is Pepíta.

You can bring
No sweet thing,
But my mind
Still shall find
It is my Pepíta.

Memory
Says to me
It is she, —
She is fair
Past compare
In the land of Tubal.

PEPÍTA (*seizing* JUAN'S *hand again*)

Oh, then, you do love me?

JUAN

Yes, in the song.

PEPÍTA (*sadly*)

Not out of it? — not love me out of it?

JUAN

Only a little out of it, my bird.
When I was singing I was Andrès, say,
Or one who loves you better still than Andrès.

PEPÍTA

Not yourself?

JUAN

No!

PEPÍTA (*throwing his hand down pettishly*)

Then take it back again!
I will not have it!

JUAN

Listen, little one.
Juan is not a living man all by himself:
His life is breathed in him by other men,
And they speak out of him. He is their voice.
Juan's own life he gave once quite away.
It was Pepíta's lover singing then, — not Juan.

We old, old poets, if we kept our hearts,
Should hardly know them from another man's.
They shrink to make room for the many more
We keep within us. There, now, — one more kiss,
And then go home again.

PEPÍTA (*a little frightened, after letting* JUAN *kiss her*)

You are not wicked?

JUAN

Ask your confessor, — tell him what I said.

(PEPÍTA *goes, while* JUAN *thrums his lute again, and sings.*)

Came a pretty maid
By the moon's pure light,
Loved me well, she said,
Eyes with tears all bright,
A pretty maid!

But too late she strayed,
Moonlight pure was there;
She was naught but shade
Hiding the more fair,
The heavenly maid!

A vaulted room all stone. The light shed from a high lamp. Wooden chairs, a desk, book-shelves. The PRIOR, *in white frock, a black rosary with a crucifix of ebony and ivory at his side, is walking up and down, holding a written paper in his hands, which are clasped behind him.*

What if this witness lies? he says he heard her
Counting her blasphemies on a rosary,
And in a bold discourse with Salomo,
Say that the Host was naught but ill-mixed flour,
That it was mean to pray, — she never prayed.
I know the man who wrote this for a cur,
Who follows Don Diego, sees life 's good
In scraps my nephew flings to him. What then?
Particular lies may speak a general truth.
I guess him false, but know her heretic, —
Know her for Satan's instrument, bedecked
With heathenish charms, luring the souls of men
To damning trust in good unsanctified.
Let her be prisoned, — questioned, — she will give
Witness against herself, that were this false,

(*He looks at the paper again and reads, then again thrusts it behind him.*)

The matter and the colour are not false:
The form concerns the witness, not the judge;
For proof is gathered by the sifting mind,
Not given in crude and formal circumstance.
Suspicion is a heaven-sent lamp, and I, —
I, watchman of the Holy Office, bear
That lamp in trust. I will keep faithful watch.
The Holy Inquisition's discipline
Is mercy, saving her, if penitent, —
God grant it! — else, — root up the poison-plant,
Though 't were a lily with a golden heart!
This spotless maiden with her pagan soul
Is the arch-enemy's trap: he turns his back
On all the prostitutes, and watches her
To see her poison men with false belief
In rebel virtues. She has poisoned Silva;
His shifting mind, dangerous in fitfulness,
Strong in the contradiction of itself,

Carries his young ambitions wearily,
As holy vows regretted. Once he seemed
The fresh-oped flower of Christian knighthood, born
For feats of holy daring; and I said:
"That half of life which I, as monk, renounce,
Shall be fulfilled in him: Silva will be
That saintly noble, that wise warrior,
That blameless excellence in worldly gifts
I would have been, had I not asked to live
The higher life of man impersonal
Who reigns o'er all things by refusing all.
What is his promise now? Apostasy
From every high intent: — languid, nay, gone,
The prompt devoutness of a generous heart,
The strong obedience of a reverent will,
That breathes the Church's air and sees her light,
He peers and strains with feeble questioning,
Or else he jests. He thinks I know it not, —
I who have read the history of his lapse,
As clear as it is writ in the angel's book.
He will defy me, — flings great words at me, —
Me who have governed all our house's acts,
Since I, a stripling, ruled his stripling father.
This maiden is the cause, and if they wed,
The Holy War may count a captain lost.
For better he were dead than keep his place,
And fill it infamously: in God's war
Slackness is infamy. Shall I stand by
And let the tempter win? defraud Christ's cause,
And blot his banner? — all for scruples weak
Of pity towards their young and frolicsome blood;
Or nice discrimination of the tool
By which my hand shall work a sacred rescue?
The fence of rules is for the purblind crowd;
They walk by averaged precepts; sovereign men,
Seeing by God's light, see the general

By seeing all the special, — own no rule
But their full vision of the moment's worth.
'T is so God governs, using wicked men, —
Nay, scheming fiends, to work his purposes.
Evil that good may come? Measure the good
Before you say what 's evil. Perjury?
I scorn the perjurer, but I will use him
To serve the holy truth. There is no lie
Save in his soul, and let his soul be judged.
I know the truth, and act upon the truth.

O God, thou knowest that my will is pure.
Thy servant owns naught for himself, his wealth
Is but obedience. And I have sinned
In keeping small respects of human love, —
Calling it mercy. Mercy? Where evil is
True mercy must be terrible. Mercy would save.
Save whom? Save serpents, locusts, wolves?
Or out of pity let the idiots gorge
Within a famished town? Or save the gains
Of men who trade in poison lest they starve?
Save all things mean and foul that clog the earth
Stifling the better? Save the fools who cling
For refuge round their hideous idol's limbs,
So leave the idol grinning unconsumed,
And save the fools to breed idolaters?
Oh mercy worthy of the licking hound
That knows no future but its feeding time!
Mercy has eyes that pierce the ages, — sees
From heights divine of the eternal purpose
Far-scattered consequence in its vast sum;
Chooses to save, but with illumined vision
Sees that to save is greatly to destroy.
'T is so the Holy Inquisition sees: its wrath
Is fed from the strong heart of wisest love.
For love must needs make hatred. He who loves

God and his law must hate the foes of God.
And I have sinned in being merciful:
Being slack in hate, I have been slack in love.

(*He takes the crucifix and holds it up before him.*)

Thou shuddering, bleeding, thirsting, dying God,
Thou Man of Sorrows, scourged and bruised and torn,
Suffering to save, — wilt thou not judge the world?
This arm which held the children, this pale hand
That gently touched the eyelids of the blind,
And opened passive to the cruel nail,
Shall one day stretch to leftward of thy throne,
Charged with the power that makes the lightning strong,
And hurl thy foes to everlasting hell.
And thou, Immaculate Mother, Virgin mild,
Thou seven-fold pierced, thou pitying, pleading Queen,
Shalt see and smile, while the black filthy souls
Sink with foul weight to their eternal place,
Purging the Holy Light. Yea, I have sinned
And called it mercy. But I shrink no more.
To-morrow morn this temptress shall be safe
Under the Holy Inquisition's key.
He thinks to wed her, and defy me then,
She being shielded by our house's name.
But he shall never wed her. I have said.

The time is come. *Exurge, Domine,*
Judica causam tuam. Let thy foes
Be driven as the smoke before the wind,
And melt like wax upon the furnace lip!

A large chamber richly furnished opening on a terrace-garden, the trees visible through the win-

dow in faint moonlight. Flowers hanging about the window, lit up by the tapers. The casket of jewels open on a table. The gold necklace lying near. FEDALMA, *splendidly dressed and adorned with pearls and rubies, is walking up and down.*

So soft a night was never made for sleep,
But for the waking of the finer sense
To every murmuring and gentle sound,
To subtlest odours, pulses, visitings
That touch our frames with wings too delicate
To be discerned amid the blare of day.

(*She pauses near the window to gather some jasmine: then walks again.*)

Surely these flowers keep happy watch, — their
breath
Is their fond memory of the loving light.
I often rue the hours I lose in sleep:
It is a bliss too brief, only to see
This glorious world, to hear the voice of love,
To feel the touch, the breath of tenderness,
And then to rest as from a spectacle.
I need the curtained stillness of the night
To live through all my happy hours again
With more selection, — cull them quite away
From blemished moments. Then in loneliness
The face that bent before me in the day
Rises in its own light, more vivid seems
Painted upon the dark, and ceaseless glows
With sweet solemnity of gazing love,
Till like the heavenly blue it seems to grow
Nearer, more kindred, and more cherishing,
Mingling with all my being. Then the words,
The tender low-toned words come back again,
With repetition welcome as the chime

Of softly hurrying brooks, — "My only love, —
My love while life shall last, — my own Fedalma!"
Oh, it is mine, — the joy that once has been!
Poor eager hope is but a stammerer,
Must listen dumbly to great memory,
Who makes our bliss the sweeter by her telling.

(*She pauses a moment musingly.*)

But that dumb hope is still a sleeping guard
Whose quiet rhythmic breath saves me from dread
In this fair paradise. For if the earth
Broke off with flower-fringed edge, visibly sheer,
Leaving no footing for my forward step
But empty blackness . . .
Nay, there is no fear, —
They will renew themselves, day and my joy,
And all that past which is securely mine,
Will be the hidden root that nourishes
Our still unfolding, ever-ripening love!

(*While she is uttering the last words, a little bird falls softly on the floor behind her; she hears the light sound of its fall and turns round.*)

Did something enter? . . .
Yes, this little bird . . .

(*She lifts it.*)

Dead and yet warm: 't was seeking sanctuary,
And died, perhaps of fright, at the altar foot.
Stay, there is something tied beneath the wing!
A strip of linen, streaked with blood, — what blood?
The streaks are written words, — are sent to me, —
O God, are sent to me! *Dear child, Fedalma,*
Be brave, give no alarm, — your Father comes!

(*She lets the bird fall again.*)

My Father . . . comes . . . my Father. . . .

(*She turns in quivering expectation toward the window. There is perfect stillness a few moments until* ZARCA *appears at the window. He enters quickly and noiselessly; then stands still at his full height, and at a distance from* FEDALMA.)

FEDALMA (*in a low distinct tone of terror*)

It is he!
I said his fate had laid its hold on mine.

ZARCA (*advancing a step or two*)

You know, then, who I am?

FEDALMA

The prisoner, —
He whom I saw in fetters, — and this necklace —

ZARCA

Was played with by your fingers when it hung
About my neck, full fifteen years ago!

FEDALMA (*starts, looks at the necklace and handles it, then speaks as if unconsciously*)

Full fifteen years ago!

ZARCA

The very day
I lost you, when you wore a tiny gown
Of scarlet cloth with golden broidery:
'T was clasped in front by coins, — two golden coins.

The one towards the left was split in two
Across the King's head, right from brow to nape,
A dent i' the middle nicking in the cheek.
You see I know the little gown by heart.

FEDALMA (*growing paler and more tremulous*)

Yes. It is true, — I have the gown, — the clasps, —
The braid, — sore tarnished: — it is long ago!

ZARCA

But yesterday to me; for till to-day
I saw you always as that little child.
And when they took my necklace from me, still
Your fingers played about it on my neck,
And still those buds of fingers on your feet
Caught in its meshes as you seemed to climb
Up to my shoulder. You were not stolen all.
You had a double life fed from my heart. . . .

(FEDALMA, *letting fall the necklace, makes an impulsive movement towards him with outstretched hands.*)

For the Zincalo loves his children well.

FEDALMA (*shrinking, trembling, and letting fall her hands*)

How came it that you sought me, — no, — I mean
How came it that you knew me, — that you lost me?

ZARCA (*standing perfectly still*)

Poor child! I see, I see, — your ragged father
Is welcome as the piercing wintry wind
Within this silken chamber. It is well.
I would not have a child who stooped to feign,
And aped a sudden love. True hate were better.

FEDALMA (*raising her eyes towards him, with a flash of admiration, and looking at him fixedly*)

Father, how was it that we lost each other?

ZARCA

I lost you as a man may lose a diamond
Wherein he has compressed his total wealth,
Or the right hand whose cunning makes him great:
I lost you by a trivial accident.
Marauding Spaniards, sweeping like a storm
Over a spot within the Moorish bounds,
Near where our camp lay, doubtless snatched you up,
When Zind, your nurse, as she confessed, was urged
By burning thirst to wander towards the stream,
And leave you on the sand some paces off
Playing with pebbles, while she dog-like lapped.
'T was so I lost you, — never saw you more
Until to-day I saw you dancing! Saw
The child of the Zincalo making sport
For those who spit upon her people's name.

FEDALMA (*vehemently*)

It was not sport. What if the world looked on? —
I danced for joy, — for love of all the world.
But when you looked at me my joy was stabbed, —
Stabbed with your pain. I wondered . . . now I know . . .
It was my father's pain.

(*She pauses a moment with eyes bent downward, during which* ZARCA *examines her face. Then she says quickly,*)

How were you sure
At once I was your child?

ZARCA

Oh, I had witness strong
As any Cadi needs, before I saw you!
I fitted all my memories with the chat
Of one named Juan, — one whose rapid talk
Showers like the blossoms from a light-twigged shrub,
If you but coughed beside it. I learned all
The story of your Spanish nurture, — all
The promise of your fortune. When at last
I fronted you, my little maid full-grown,
Belief was turned to vision: then I saw
That she whom Spaniards called the bright Fedalma, —
The little red-frocked foundling three years old, —
Grown to such perfectness the Christian Duke
Had wooed her for his Duchess, — was the child,
Sole offspring of my flesh, that Lambra bore
One hour before the Christian, hunting us,
Hurried her on to death. Therefore I sought you,
Therefore I come to claim you — claim my child,
Not from the Spaniard, not from him who robbed,
But from herself.

(FEDALMA *has gradually approached close to* ZARCA, *and with a low sob sinks on her knees before him. He stoops to kiss her brow, and lays his hands on her head.*)

ZARCA (*with solemn tenderness*)

Then my child owns her father?

FEDALMA

Father! yes.
I will eat dust before I will deny
The flesh I spring from.

ZARCA

There my daughter spoke.
Away then with these rubies!

(*He seizes the circlet of rubies and flings it on the ground.* FEDALMA, *starting from the ground with strong emotion, shrinks backward.*)

Such a crown
Is infamy on a Zincala's brow.
It is her people's blood, decking her shame.

FEDALMA (*after a moment, slowly and distinctly, as if accepting a doom*).

Then . . . I am . . . a Zincala?

ZARCA

Of a blood
Unmixed as virgin wine-juice.

FEDALMA

Of a race
More outcast and despised than Moor or Jew?

ZARCA

Yes: wanderers whom no god took knowledge of
To give them laws, to fight for them, or blight
Another race to make them ampler room;
A people with no home even in memory,
No dimmest lore of giant ancestors
To make a common hearth for piety.

FEDALMA

A race that lives on prey as foxes do
With stealthy, petty rapine: so despised,

It is not persecuted, only spurned,
Crushed underfoot, warred on by chance like rats,
Or swarming flies, or reptiles of the sea
Dragged in the net unsought, and flung far off
To perish as they may?

ZARCA

You paint us well.
So abject are the men whose blood we share;
Untutored, unbefriended, unendowed;
No favourites of heaven or of men.
Therefore I cling to them! Therefore no lure
Shall draw me to disown them, or forsake
The meagre wandering herd that lows for help
And needs me for its guide, to seek my pasture
Among the well-fed beeves that graze at will.
Because our race have no great memories,
I will so live they shall remember me
For deeds of such divine beneficence
As rivers have, that teach men what is good
By blessing them. I have been schooled, — have caught
Lore from the Hebrew, deftness from the Moor, —
Know the rich heritage, the milder life,
Of nations fathered by a mighty Past;
But were our race accursed (as they who make
Good luck a god count all unlucky men)
I would espouse their curse sooner than take
My gifts from brethren naked of all good,
And lend them to the rich for usury.

(FEDALMA *again advances, and putting forth her right hand grasps* ZARCA'S *left. He places his other hand on her shoulder. They stand so, looking at each other.*)

ZARCA

And you, my child? are you of other mind,
Choosing forgetfulness, hating the truth
That says you are akin to needy men? —
Wishing your father were some Christian Duke,
Who could hang Gypsies when their task was done,
While you, his daughter, were not bound to care?

FEDALMA (*in a troubled, eager voice*)

No, I should always care — I cared for you —
For all, before I dreamed . . .

ZARCA

Before you dreamed
You were a born Zincalà, — in the bonds
Of the Zincali's faith.

FEDALMA (*bitterly*)

Zincali's faith?
Men say they have none.

ZARCA

Oh, it is a faith
Taught by no priest, but by their beating hearts.
Faith to each other: the fidelity
Of fellow-wanderers in a desert place
Who share the same dire thirst, and therefore share
The scanty water: the fidelity
Of men whose pulses leap with kindred fire,
Who in the flash of eyes, the clasp of hands,
The speech that even in lying tells the truth
Of heritage inevitable as past deeds,
Nay, in the silent bodily presence feel

The mystic stirring of a common life
Which makes the many one: fidelity
To that deep consecrating oath our sponsor Fate
Made through our infant breath when we were born,
The fellow-heirs of that small island, Life,
Where we must dig and sow and reap with brothers.
Fear thou that oath, my daughter, — nay, not fear,
But love it; for the sanctity of oaths
Lies not in lightning that avenges them,
But in the injury wrought by broken bonds
And in the garnered good of human trust.
And you have sworn, — even with your infant breath
You too were pledged . . .

FEDALMA (*lets go* ZARCA'S *hand and sinks backward on her knees, with bent head, as if before some impending crushing weight*)

What have I sworn?

ZARCA

To live the life of the Zincala's child:
The child of him who, being chief, will be
The saviour of his tribe, or if he fail
Will choose to fail rather than basely win
The prize of renegades. Nay — will not choose —
Is there a choice for strong souls to be weak?
For men erect to crawl like hissing snakes?
I choose not, — I *am* Zarca. Let him choose
Who halts and wavers, having appetite
To feed on garbage. You, my child, — are you
Halting and wavering?

FEDALMA (*raising her head*)

Say what is my task?

ZARCA

To be the angel of a homeless tribe:
To help me bless a race taught by no prophet,
And make their name, now but a badge of scorn,
A glorious banner floating in their midst,
Stirring the air they breathe with impulses
Of generous pride, exalting fellowship
Until it soars to magnanimity.
I 'll guide my brethren forth to their new land,
Where they shall plant and sow and reap their own,
Serving each other's needs, and so be spurred
To skill in all the arts that succour life;
Where we may kindle our first altar-fire
From settled hearths, and call our Holy Place
The hearth that binds us in one family.
That land awaits them: they await their chief, —
Me who am prisoned. All depends on you.

FEDALMA (*rising to her full height, and looking solemnly at* ZARCA)

Father, your child is ready! She will not
Forsake her kindred: she will brave all scorn
Sooner than scorn herself. Let Spaniards all,
Christians, Jews, Moors, shoot out the lip and say,
" Lo, the first hero in a tribe of thieves."
Is it not written so of them? They, too,
Were slaves, lost, wandering, sunk beneath a curse,
Till Moses, Christ, and Mahomet were born,
Till beings lonely in their greatness lived,
And lived to save their people. Father, listen.
To-morrow the Duke weds me secretly:

But straight he will present me as his wife
To all his household, cavaliers and dames
And noble pages. Then I will declare
Before them all: "I am his daughter, his,
The Gypsy's, owner of this golden badge."
Then I shall win your freedom; then the Duke —
Why, he will be your son! — will send you forth
With aid and honours. Then, before all eyes
I 'll clasp this badge on you, and lift my brow
For you to kiss it, saying by that sign,
"I glory in my father." This, to-morrow.

ZARCA

A woman's dream, — who thinks by smiling well
To ripen figs in frost. What! marry first,
And then proclaim your birth? Enslave yourself
To use your freedom? Share another's name,
Then treat it as you will? How will that tune
Ring in your bridegroom's ears, — that sudden song
Of triumph in your Gypsy father?

FEDALMA (*discouraged*)

Nay,
I meant not so. We marry hastily —
Yet there is time — there will be: — in less space
Than he can take to look at me, I 'll speak
And tell him all. Oh, I am not afraid!
His love for me is stronger than all hate;
Nay, stronger than my love, which cannot sway
Demons that haunt me, — tempt me to rebel.
Were he Fedalma and I Silva, he
Could love confession, prayers, and tonsured monks
If my soul craved them. He will never hate
The race that bore him what he loves the most.

I shall but do more strongly what I will,
Having his will to help me. And to-morrow,
Father, as surely as this heart shall beat,
You, every chained Zincalo, shall be free.

ZARCA (*coming nearer to her, and laying his hand on her shoulder*)

Too late, too poor a service that, my child!
Not so the woman who would save her tribe
Must help its heroes, — not by wordy breath,
By easy prayers strong in a lover's ear,
By showering wreaths and sweets and wafted kisses,
And then, when all the smiling work is done,
Turning to rest upon her down again,
And whisper languid pity for her race
Upon the bosom of her alien spouse.
Not to such petty mercies as can fall
'Twixt stitch and stitch of silken broidery work.
Such miracles of mitred saints who pause
Beneath their gilded canopy to heal
A man sun-stricken: not to such trim merit
As soils its dainty shoes for charity
And simpers meekly at the pious stain,
But never trod with naked bleeding feet
Where no man praised it, and where no Church blessed:
Not to such almsdeeds fit for holidays
Were you, my daughter, consecrated, — bound
By laws that, breaking, you will dip your bread
In murdered brother's blood and call it sweet, —
When you were born in the Zincalo's tent,
And lifted up in sight of all your tribe,
Who greeted you with shouts of loyal joy,
Sole offspring of the chief in whom they trust
As in the oft-tried never-failing flint
They strike their fire from. Other work is yours.

FEDALMA

What work? — what is it that you ask of me?

ZARCA

A work as pregnant as the act of men
Who set their ships aflame and spring to land,
A fatal deed . . .

FEDALMA

Stay! never utter it!
If it can part my lot from his whose love
Has chosen me. Talk not of oaths, of birth,
Of men as numerous as the dim white stars, —
As cold and distant, too, for my heart's pulse.
No ills on earth, though you should count them up
With grains to make a mountain, can outweigh
For me, his ill who is my supreme love.
All sorrows else are but imagined flames,
Making me shudder at an unfelt smart,
But his imagined sorrow is a fire
That scorches me.

ZARCA

I know, I know it well, —
The first young passionate wail of spirits called
To some great destiny. In vain, my daughter!
Lay the young eagle in what nest you will,
The cry and swoop of eagles overhead
Vibrate prophetic in its kindred frame,
And make it spread its wings and poise itself
For the eagle's flight. Hear what you have to do.

(FEDALMA *breaks from him and stands half averted, as if she dreaded the effect of his looks and words.*)

My comrades even now file off their chains
In a low turret by the battlements,
Where we were locked with slight and sleepy guard, —
We who had files hid in our shaggy hair,
And possible ropes that waited but our will
In half our garments. Oh, the Moorish blood
Runs thick and warm to us, though thinned by chrism.
I found a friend among our jailers, — one
Who loves the Gypsy as the Moor's ally.
I know the secrets of this fortress. Listen.
Hard by yon terrace is a narrow stair,
Cut in the living rock, and at one point
In its slow straggling course it branches off
Towards a low wooden door, that art has bossed
To such unevenness, it seems one piece
With the rough-hewn rock. Opened, it leads
Through a broad passage burrowed underground
A good half-mile out to the open plain:
Made for escape, in dire extremity
From siege or burning, of the house's wealth
In women or in gold. To find that door
Needs one who knows the number of the steps
Just to the turning-point; to open it,
Needs one who knows the secret of the bolt.
You have that secret: you will ope that door,
And fly with us.

FEDALMA (*receding a little, and gathering herself up in an attitude of resolve opposite to* ZARCA)

No, I will never fly!
Never forsake that chief half of my soul
Where lies my love. I swear to set you free.
Ask for no more; it is not possible.

Father, my soul is not too base to ring
At touch of your great thoughts; nay, in my blood
There streams the sense unspeakable of kind,
As leopard feels at ease with leopard. But, —
Look at these hands! You say when they were little
They played about the gold upon your neck.
I do believe it, for their tiny pulse
Made record of it in the inmost coil
Of growing memory. But see them now!
Oh they have made fresh record; twined themselves
With other throbbing hands whose pulses feed
Not memories only but a blended life, —
Life that will bleed to death if it be severed.
Have pity on me, father! Wait the morning;
Say you will wait the morning. I will win
Your freedom openly: you shall go forth
With aid and honours. Silva will deny
Naught to my asking . . .

ZARCA (*with contemptuous decision*)

Till you ask him aught
Wherein he is powerless. Soldiers even now
Murmur against him that he risks the town,
And forfeits all the prizes of a foray
To get his bridal pleasure with a bride
Too low for him. They 'll murmur more and louder
If captives of our pith and sinew, fit
For all the work the Spaniard hates, are freed, —
Now, too, when Spanish hands are scanty. What,
Turn Gypsies loose instead of hanging them!
'T is flat against the edict. Nay, perchance
Murmurs aloud may turn to silent threats
Of some well-sharpened dagger; for your Duke

Has to his heir a pious cousin, who deems
The Cross were better served if he were Duke.
Such good you 'll work your lover by your prayers.

FEDALMA

Then, I will free you now! You shall be safe,
Nor he be blamed, save for his love to me.
I will declare what I have done: the deed
May put our marriage off. . . .

ZARCA

Ay, till the time
When you shall be a queen in Africa,
And he be prince enough to sue for you.
You cannot free us and come back to him.

FEDALMA

And why?

ZARCA

I would compel you to go forth.

FEDALMA

You tell me that?

ZARCA

Yes, for I 'd have you choose;
Though, being of the blood you are, — my blood, —
You have no right to choose.

FEDALMA

I only owe
A daughter's debt; I was not born a slave.

ZARCA

No, not a slave; but you were born to reign.
'T is a compulsion of a higher sort,
Whose fetters are the net invisible
That holds all life together. Royal deeds
May make long destinies for multitudes,
And you are called to do them. You belong
Not to the petty round of circumstance
That makes a woman's lot, but to your tribe,
Who trust in me and in my blood with trust
That men call blind; but it is only blind
As unyeaned reason is, that growing stirs
Within the womb of superstition.

FEDALMA

No!
I belong to him who loves me — whom I love —
Who chose me — whom I chose — to whom I pledged
A woman's truth. And that is nature too,
Issuing a fresher law than laws of birth.

ZARCA

Well, then, unmake yourself from a Zincala, —
Unmake yourself from being child of mine!
Take holy water, cross your dark skin white;
Round your proud eyes to foolish kitten looks;
Walk mincingly, and smirk, and twitch your robe:
Unmake yourself, — doff all the eagle plumes
And be a parrot, chained to a ring that slips
Upon a Spaniard's thumb, at will of his
That you should prattle o'er his words again!
Get a small heart that flutters at the smiles
Of that plump penitent and greedy saint
Who breaks all treaties in the name of God,

Saves souls by confiscation, sends to heaven
The altar-fumes of burning heretics,
And chaffers with the Levite for the gold;
Holds Gypsies beasts unfit for sacrifice,
So sweeps them out like worms alive or dead.
Go, trail your gold and velvet in her presence! —
Conscious Zincala, smile at your rare luck,
While half your brethren . . .

FEDALMA

I am not so vile!
It is not to such mockeries that I cling,
Not to the flaring tow of gala-lights:
It is to him — my love — the face of day.

ZARCA

What, will you part him from the air he breathes,
Never inhale with him although you kiss him?
Will you adopt a soul without its thoughts,
Or grasp a life apart from flesh and blood?
Till then you cannot wed a Spanish Duke
And not wed shame at mention of your race,
And not wed hardness to their miseries, —
Nay, not wed murder. Would you save my life
Yet stab my purpose? maim my every limb,
Put out my eyes, and turn me loose to feed?
Is that salvation? rather drink my blood.
That child of mine who weds my enemy, —
Adores a God who took no heed of Gypsies, —
Forsakes her people, leaves their poverty
To join the luckier crowd that mocks their woes, —
That child of mine is doubly murderess,
Murdering her father's hope, her people's trust.
Such draughts are mingled in your cup of love.

And when you have become a thing so poor,
Your life is all a fashion without law
Save frail conjecture of a changing wish,
Your worshipped sun, your smiling face of day,
Will turn to cloudiness, and you will shiver
In your thin finery of vain desire.
Men call his passion madness; and he, too,
May learn to think it madness: 't is a thought
Of ducal sanity.

FEDALMA

No, he is true!
And if I part from him I part from joy.
Oh, it was morning with us, — I seemed young.
But now I know I am an aged sorrow, —
My people's sorrow. Father, since I am yours, —
Since I must walk an unslain sacrifice,
Carrying the knife within me, quivering, —
Put cords upon me, drag me to the doom
My birth has laid upon me. See, I kneel:
I cannot will to go.

ZARCA

Will then to stay!
Say you will take your better, painted such
By blind desire, and choose the hideous worse
For thousands who were happier but for you.
My thirty followers are assembled now
Without this terrace: I your father wait
That you may lead us forth to liberty, —
Restore me to my tribe, — five hundred men
Whom I alone can save, alone can rule,
And plant them as a mighty nation's seed.
Why, vagabonds who clustered round one man,

Their voice of God, their prophet, and their king,
Twice grew to empire on the teeming shores
Of Africa, and sent new royalties
To feed afresh the Arab sway in Spain.
My vagabonds are a seed more generous,
Quick as the serpent, loving as the hound,
And beautiful as disinherited gods.
They have a promised land beyond the sea:
There I may lead them, raise my standard, call
All wandering Zincali to that home,
And make a nation, — bring light, order, law,
Instead of chaos. You, my only heir,
Are called to reign for me when I am gone.
Now choose your deed: to save or to destroy.
You, woman and Zincala, fortunate
Above your fellows, — you who hold a curse
Or blessing in the hollow of your hand, —
Say you will loose that hand from fellowship,
Let go the rescuing rope, hurl all the tribes,
Children and countless beings yet to come,
Down from the upward path of light and joy,
Back to the dark and marshy wilderness
Where life is naught but blind tenacity
Of that which is. Say you will curse your race!

FEDALMA (*rising and stretching out her arms in deprecation*)

No, no, — I will not say it, — I will go!
Father, I choose! I will not take a heaven
Haunted by shrieks of far-off misery.
This deed and I have ripened with the hours:
It is a part of me, — awakened thought
That, rising like a giant, masters me,
And grows into a doom. O mother life,

That seemed to nourish me so tenderly,
Even in the womb you vowed me to the fire,
Hung on my soul the burden of men's hopes,
And pledged me to redeem! — I 'll pay the debt.
You gave me strength that I should pour it all
Into this anguish. I can never shrink
Back into bliss, — my heart has grown too big
With things that might be. Father, I will go.
I will strip off these gems. Some happier bride
Shall wear them, since Fedalma would be dowered
With naught but curses, dowered with misery
Of men, — of women, who have hearts to bleed
As hers is bleeding.

(*She sinks on a seat, and begins to take off her jewels.*)

Now, good gems, we part.
Speak of me always tenderly to Silva.

(*She pauses, turning to* Zarca.)

O father, will the women of our tribe
Suffer as I do, in the years to come
When you have made them great in Africa?
Redeemed from ignorant ills only to feel
A conscious woe? Then, — is it worth the pains?
Were it not better when we reach that shore
To raise a funeral-pile and perish all?
So closing up a myriad avenues
To misery yet unwrought? My soul is faint, —
Will these sharp pangs buy any certain good?

Zarca

Nay, never falter: no great deed is done
By falterers who ask for certainty.
No good is certain, but the steadfast mind,
The undivided will to seek the good:

'T is that compels the elements, and wrings
A human music from the indifferent air.
The greatest gift the hero leaves his race
Is to have been a hero. Say we fail! —
We feed the high tradition of the world,
And leave our spirit in Zincalo breasts.

FEDALMA (*unclasping her jewelled belt, and throwing it down*)

Yes, say that we shall fail! I will not count
On aught but being faithful. I will take
This yearning self of mine and strangle it.
I will not be half-hearted: never yet
Fedalma did aught with a wavering soul.
Die, my young joy, — die, all my hungry hopes, —
The milk you cry for from the breast of life
Is thick with curses. Oh, all fatness here
Snatches its meat from leanness, — feeds on graves.
I will seek nothing but to shun what 's base.
The saints were cowards who stood by to see
Christ crucified: they should have flung themselves
Upon the Roman spears, and died in vain, —
The grandest death, to die in vain, — for love
Greater than sways the forces of the world.
That death shall be my bridegroom. I will wed
The curse of the Zincali. Father, come!

ZARCA

No curse has fallen on us till we cease
To help each other. You, if you are false
To that first fellowship, lay on the curse.
But write now to the Spaniard: briefly say
That I, your father, came; that you obeyed
The fate which made you a Zincala, as his fate

Made him a Spanish duke and Christian knight.
He must not think . . .

FEDALMA

Yes, I will write, but he,
Oh, he would know it, — he would never think
The chain that dragged me from him could be aught
But scorching iron entering in my soul.

(*She writes.*)

Silva, sole love, — he came, — my father came.
I am the daughter of the Gypsy chief
Who means to be the Saviour of our tribe.
He calls on me to live for his great end.
To live? nay, die for it. Fedalma dies
In leaving Silva: all that lives henceforth
Is the Zincala. (*She rises.*)
Father, now I go
To wed my people's lot.

ZARCA

To wed a crown.
We will make royal the Zincali's lot, —
Give it a country, homes, and monuments
Held sacred through the lofty memories
That we shall leave behind us. Come, my Queen!

FEDALMA

Stay, my betrothal ring! — one kiss, — farewell!
O love, you were my crown. No other crown
Is aught but thorns on my poor woman's brow.

(*Exeunt.*)

BOOK II

SILVA was marching homeward while the moon
Still shed mild brightness like the far-off hope
Of those pale virgin lives that wait and pray.
The stars thin-scattered made the heavens large,
Bending in slow procession; in the east
Emergent from the dark waves of the hills,
Seeming a little sister of the moon,
Glowed Venus all unquenched. Silva, in haste,
Exultant and yet anxious, urged his troop
To quick and quicker march: he had delight
In forward stretching shadows, in the gleams
That travelled on the armour of the van,
And in the many-hoofed sound: in all that told
Of hurrying movement to o'ertake his thought
Already in Bedmár, close to Fedalma,
Leading her forth a wedded bride, fast vowed,
Defying Father Isidor. His glance
Took in with much content the priest who rode
Firm in his saddle, stalwart and broad-backed,
Crisp-curled, and comfortably secular,
Right in the front of him. But by degrees
Stealthily faint, disturbing with slow loss
That showed not yet full promise of a gain,
The light was changing and the watch intense
Of moon and stars seemed weary, shivering:
The sharp white brightness passed from off the rocks
Carrying the shadows: beauteous Night lay dead
Under the pall of twilight, and the love-star
Sickened and shrank. The troop was winding now

Upward to where a pass between the peaks
Seemed like an opened gate, — to Silva seemed
An outer-gate of heaven, for through that pass
They entered his own valley, near Bedmár.
Sudden within the pass a horseman rose
One instant dark upon the banner pale
Of rock-cut sky, the next in motion swift
With hat and plume high shaken, — ominous.
Silva had dreamed his future, and the dream
Held not this messenger. A minute more, —
It was his friend Don Alvar whom he saw
Reining his horse up, face to face with him,
Sad as the twilight, all his clothes ill-girt, —
As if he had been roused to see one die,
And brought the news to him whom death had robbed.
Silva believed he saw the worst, — the town
Stormed by the infidel, — or, could it be
Fedalma dragged? — no, there was not yet time.
But with a marble face, he only said,
"What evil, Alvar?"
"What this paper speaks."
It was Fedalma's letter folded close
And mute as yet for Silva. But his friend
Keeping it still sharp-pinched against his breast,
"It will smite hard, my lord: a private grief.
I would not have you pause to read it here.
Let us ride on, — we use the moments best,
Reaching the town with speed. The smaller ill
Is that our Gypsy prisoners have escaped."
"No more. Give me the paper, — nay, I know, —
'T will make no difference. Bid them march on faster."
Silva pushed forward, — held the paper crushed
Close in his right. "They have imprisoned her,"
He said to Alvar in low, hard-cut tones,

Like a dream-speech of slumbering revenge.
"No, — when they came to fetch her, she was gone."
Swift as the right touch on a spring, that word
Made Silva read the letter. She was gone!
But not into locked darkness, — only gone
Into free air, — where he might find her yet.
The bitter loss had triumph in it, — what!
They would have seized her with their holy claws?
The Prior's sweet morsel of despotic hate
Was snatched from off his lips. This misery
Had yet a taste of joy.
But she was gone!
The sun had risen, and in the castle walls
The light grew strong and stronger. Silva walked
Through the long corridor where dimness yet
Cherished a lingering, flickering, dying hope:
Fedalma still was there, — he could not see
The vacant place that once her presence filled.
Can we believe that the dear dead are gone?
Love in sad weeds forgets the funeral day,
Opens the chamber door and almost smiles, —
Then sees the sunbeams pierce athwart the bed
Where the pale face is not. So Silva's joy,
Like the sweet habit of caressing hands
That seek the memory of another hand,
Still lived on fitfully in spite of words,
And, numbing thought with vague illusion, dulled
The slow and steadfast beat of certainty.
But in the rooms inexorable light
Streamed through the open window where she fled,
Streamed on the belt and coronet thrown down, —
Mute witnesses, — sought out the typic ring
That sparkled on the crimson, solitary,
Wounding him like a word. O hateful light!

It filled the chambers with her absence, glared
On all the motionless things her hand had touched,
Motionless all, — save where old Iñez lay
Sunk on the floor holding her rosary,
Making its shadow tremble with her fear.
And Silva passed her by because she grieved:
It was the lute, the gems, the pictured heads,
He longed to crush, because they made no sign
But of insistence that she was not there,
She who had filled his sight and hidden them.
He went forth on the terrace tow'rd the stairs,
Saw the rained petals of the cistus flowers
Crushed by large feet; but on one shady spot
Far down the steps, where dampness made a home,
He saw a footprint delicate-slippered, small,
So dear to him, he searched for sister-prints,
Searched in the rock-hewn passage with a lamp
For other trace of her, and found a glove;
But not Fedalma's. It was Juan's glove,
Tasselled, perfumed, embroidered with his name,
A gift of dames. Then, Juan, too, was gone?
Full-mouthed conjecture, hurrying through the town,
Had spread the tale already, — it was he
That helped the Gypsies' flight. He talked and sang
Of nothing but the Gypsies and Fedalma.
He drew the threads together, wove the plan.
Had lingered out by moonlight and been seen
Strolling, as was his wont, within the walls,
Humming his ditties. So Don Alvar told,
Conveying outside rumour. But the Duke
Keeping his haughtiness as a visor closed
Would show no agitated front in quest
Of small disclosures. What her writing bore

Had been enough. He knew that she was gone,
Knew why.
" The Duke," some said, " will send a force,
Retake the prisoners, and bring back his bride."
But others, winking, " Nay, her wedding dress
Would be the *san-benito*. 'T is a fight
Between the Duke and Prior. Wise bets will choose
The churchman: he 's the iron, and the Duke " —
" Is a fine piece of pottery," said mine host,
Softening the epigram with a bland regret.

There was the thread that in the new-made knot
Of obstinate circumstance seemed hardest drawn,
Vexed most the sense of Silva, in these hours
Of fresh and angry pain, — there, in that fight
Against a foe whose sword was magical,
His shield invisible terrors, — against a foe
Who stood as if upon the smoking mount
Ordaining plagues. All else, Fedalma's flight,
The father's claim, her Gypsy birth disclosed,
Were momentary crosses, hindrances
A Spanish noble might despise. This Chief
Might still be treated with, would not refuse
A proffered ransom, which would better serve
Gypsy prosperity, give him more power
Over his tribe, than any fatherhood:
Nay, all the father in him must plead loud
For marriage of his daughter where she loved, —
Her love being placed so high and lustrously.
The keen Zincalo had foreseen a price
That would be paid him for his daughter's dower, —
Might soon give signs. Oh, all his purpose lay
Face upward. Silva here felt strong, and smiled.
What could a Spanish noble not command?

He only helped the Queen, because he chose, —
Could war on Spaniards, and could spare the
Moor, —
Buy justice, or defeat it, — if he would:
Was loyal, not from weakness but from strength
Of high resolve to use his birthright well.
For nobles too are gods, like Emperors,
Accept perforce their own divinity
And wonder at the virtue of their touch,
Till obstinate resistance shakes their creed,
Shattering that self whose wholeness is not rounded
Save in the plastic souls of other men.
Don Silva had been suckled in that creed
(A speculative noble else, knowing Italian),
Held it absurd as foolish argument
If any failed in deference, was too proud
Not to be courteous to so poor a knave
As one who knew not necessary truths
Of birth and precedence; but cross his will,
The miracle-working will, his rage leaped out
As by a right divine to rage more fatal
Than a mere mortal man's. And now that will
Had met a stronger adversary, — strong
As awful ghosts are whom we cannot touch,
While they grasp *us,* subtly as poisoned air,
In deep-laid fibres of inherited fear
That lie below all courage.
Silva said,
" She is not lost to me, might still be mine
But for the Inquisition, — the dire hand
That waits to clutch her with a hideous grasp,
Not passionate, human, living, but a grasp
As in the death-throe when the human soul
Departs and leaves force unrelenting, locked,
Not to be loosened save by slow decay
That frets the universe. Father Isidor

Has willed it so: his phial dropped the oil
To catch the air-borne motes of idle slander;
He fed the fascinated gaze that clung
Round all her movements, frank as growths
With the new hateful interest of suspicion.
What barrier is this Gypsy? a mere gate
I 'll find the key for. The one barrier,
The tightening cord that winds about my limbs,
Is this kind uncle, this imperious saint,
He who will save me, guard me from myself.
And he can work his will: I have no help
Save reptile secrecy, and no revenge
Save that I *will* do what he schemes to hinder.
Ay, secrecy, and disobedience, — these
No tyranny can master. Disobey!
You may divide the universe with God,
Keeping your will unbent, and hold a world
Where he is not supreme. The Prior shall know it!
His will shall breed resistance: he shall do
The thing he would not, further what he hates
By hardening my resolve."
But 'neath this inward speech, —
Predominant, hectoring, the more passionate voice
Of many-blended consciousness, — there breathed
Murmurs of doubt, the weakness of a self
That is not one; denies and yet believes;
Protests with passion, " This is natural," —
Yet owns the other still were truer, better,
Could nature follow it. A self disturbed
By budding growths of reason premature
That breed disease. Spite of defiant rage
Silva half shrank before the steadfast man
Whose life was one compacted whole, a state
Where the rule changed not, and the law was strong.
Then straightway he resented that forced tribute,

Rousing rebellion with intenser will.
But soon this inward strife the slow-paced hours
Slackened; and the soul sank with hunger-pangs,
Hunger of love. Debate was swept right down
By certainty of loss intolerable.
A little loss! only a dark-tressed maid
Who had no heritage save her beauteous being!
But in the candour of her virgin eyes
Saying, I love; and in the mystic charm
Of her dear presence, Silva found a heaven
Where faith and hope were drowned as stars in day.
Fedalma there, each momentary Now
Seemed a whole blest existence, a full cup
That, flowing over, asked no pouring hand
From past to future. All the world was hers.
Splendour was but the herald trumpet note
Of her imperial coming: penury
Vanished before her as before a gem
The pledge of treasuries. Fedalma there,
He thought all loveliness was lovelier,
She crowning it: all goodness credible,
Because of the great trust her goodness bred.
For the strong current of that passionate love
Which urged his life tow'rds hers, like urgent floods
That hurry through the various-mingled earth,
Carried within its stream all qualities
Of what it penetrated, and made love
Only another name, as Silva was,
For the whole man that breathed within his frame.
And she was gone. Well, goddesses will go;
But for a noble there were mortals left
Shaped just like goddesses, — O hateful sweet!
O impudent pleasure that should dare to front
With vulgar visage memories divine!

The noble's birthright of miraculous will
Turning *I would* to *must be,* spurning all
Offered as substitute for what it chose,
Tightened and fixed in strain irrevocable
The passionate selection of that love
Which came not first but as all-conquering last.
Great Love has many attributes, and shrines
For varied worshippers, but his force divine
Shows most its many-named fulness in the man
Whose nature multitudinously mixed,
Each ardent impulse grappling with a thought
Resists all easy gladness, all content
Save mystic rapture, where the questioning soul
Flooded with consciousness of good that is
Finds life one bounteous answer. So it was
In Silva's nature, Love had mastery there,
Not as a holiday ruler, but as one
Who quells a tumult in a day of dread,
A welcomed despot.
Oh, all comforters,
All soothing things that bring mild ecstasy,
Came with her coming, in her presence lived.
Spring afternoons, when delicate shadows fall
Pencilled upon the grass; high summer morns
When white light rains upon the quiet sea
And corn-fields flush with ripeness; odours soft, —
Dumb vagrant bliss that seems to seek a home
And find it deep within 'mid stirrings vague
Of far-off moments when our life was fresh;
All sweetly-tempered music, gentle change
Of sound, form, colour, as on wide lagoons
At sunset when from black far-floating prows
Comes a clear wafted song; all exquisite joy
Of a subdued desire, like some strong stream
Made placid in the fulness of a lake, —
All came with her sweet presence, for she brought

The love supreme which gathers to its realm
All powers of loving. Subtle nature's hand
Waked with a touch the intricate harmonies
In her own manifold work. Fedalma there,
Fastidiousness became the prelude fine
For full-contentment, and young melancholy,
Lost for its origin, seemed but the pain
Of waiting for that perfect happiness —
The happiness was gone!
He sat alone,
Hating companionship that was not hers;
Felt bruised with hopeless longing; drank, as wine,
Illusions of what had been, would have been;
Weary with anger and a strained resolve,
Sought passive happiness in a waking dream.
It has been so with rulers, emperors,
Nay, sages who held secrets of great Time,
Sharing his hoary and beneficent life, —
Men who sat throned among the multitudes, —
They have sore sickened at the loss of one.
Silva sat lonely in her chamber, leaned
Where she had leaned, to feel the evening breath
Shed from the orange-trees; when suddenly
His grief was echoed in a sad young voice
Far and yet near, brought by aerial wings.

The world is great: the birds all fly from me,
The stars are golden fruit upon a tree
All out of reach: my little sister went,
And I am lonely.

The world is great: I tried to mount the hill
Above the pines, where the light lies so still,
But it rose higher: little Lisa went,
And I am lonely.

The world is great: the wind comes rushing by,
I wonder where it comes from; sea-birds cry
And hurt my heart: my little sister went,
And I am lonely.

The world is great: the people laugh and talk,
And make loud holiday: how fast they walk!
I'm lame, they push me: little Lisa went,
And I am lonely.

'T was Pablo, like the wounded spirit of song
Pouring melodious pain to cheat the hour
For idle soldiers in the castle court.
Dreamily Silva heard and hardly felt
The song was outward, rather felt it part
Of his own aching, like the lingering day,
Or slow and mournful cadence of the bell.
But when the voice had ceased, he longed for it,
And fretted at the pause, as memory frets
When words that made its body fall away
And leave it yearning dumbly. Silva then
Bethought him whence the voice came, framed perforce
Some outward image of a life not his
That made a sorrowful centre to the world, —
A boy lame, melancholy-eyed, who bore
A viol, — yes, that very child he saw
This morning eating roots by the gateway, — saw
As one fresh-ruined sees and spells a name
And knows not what he does, yet finds it writ
Full in the inner record. Hark, again!
The voice and viol. Silva called his thought
To guide his ear and track the travelling sound.

O bird that used to press
Thy head against my cheek
With touch that seemed to speak
And ask a tender "yes," —
Ay de mi, my bird!

O tender downy breast
And warmly beating heart,
That beating seemed a part
Of me who gave it rest, —
Ay de mi, my bird!

The western court! The singer might be seen
From the upper gallery: quick the Duke was there
Looking upon the court as on a stage.
Men eased of armour, stretched upon the ground,
Gambling by snatches; shepherds from the hills
Who brought their bleating friends for slaughter; grooms
Shouldering loose harness; leather-aproned smiths,
Traders with wares, green-suited serving-men,
Made a round audience; and in their midst
Stood little Pablo, pouring forth his song,
Just as the Duke had pictured. But the song
Was strangely companied by Roldan's play
With the swift-gleaming balls, and now was crushed
By peals of laughter at grave Annibal,
Who carrying stick and purse o'erturned the pence
Making mistake by rule. Silva had thought
To melt hard bitter grief by fellowship
With the world-sorrow trembling in his ear
In Pablo's voice; had meant to give command
For the boy's presence; but this company,
This mountebank and monkey, must be — stay!
Not be excepted — must be ordered too

Into his private presence; they had brought
Suggestion of a ready shapen tool
To cut a path between his helpless wish
And what it imaged. A ready shapen tool!
A spy, an envoy whom he might despatch
In unsuspected secrecy, to find
The Gypsies' refuge so that none beside
Might learn it. And this juggler could be bribed,
Would have no fear of Moors, — for who would kill
Dancers and monkeys? — could pretend a journey
Back to his home, leaving his boy the while
To please the Duke with song. Without such chance, —
An envoy cheap and secret as a mole
Who could go scathless, come back for his pay
And vanish straight, tied by no neighbourhood, —
Without such chance as this poor juggler brought,
Finding Fedalma was betraying her.

Short interval betwixt the thought and deed.
Roldan was called to private audience
With Annibal and Pablo. All the world
(By which I mean the score or two who heard)
Shrugged high their shoulders, and supposed the Duke
Would fain beguile the evening and replace
His lacking happiness, as was the right
Of nobles, who could pay for any cure,
And wore naught broken, save a broken limb.
In truth, at first, the Duke bade Pablo sing,
But, while he sang, called Roldan wide apart,
And told him of a mission secret, brief, —
A quest which well performed might earn much gold,
But, if betrayed, another sort of wages.

Roldan was ready; "wished above all for gold
And never wished to speak; had worked enough
At wagging his old tongue and chiming jokes;
Thought it was others' turn to play the fool.
Give him but pence enough, no rabbit, sirs,
Would eat and stare and be more dumb than he.
Give him his orders."
They were given straight;
Gold for the journey, and to buy a mule
Outside the gates through which he was to pass
Afoot and carelessly. The boy would stay
Within the castle, at the Duke's command,
And must have naught but ignorance to betray
For threats or coaxing. Once the quest performed,
The news delivered with some pledge of truth
Safe to the Duke, the juggler should go forth,
A fortune in his girdle, take his boy
And settle firm as any planted tree
In fair Valencia, never more to roam.
"Good! good! most worthy of a great hidalgo!
And Roldan was the man! But Annibal, —
A monkey like no other, though morose
In private character, yet full of tricks, —
'T were hard to carry him, yet harder still
To leave the boy and him in company
And free to slip away. The boy was wild
And shy as mountain kid; once hid himself
And tried to run away; and Annibal,
Who always took the lad's side (he was small,
And they were nearer of a size, and, sirs,
Your monkey has a spite against us men
For being bigger), — Annibal went too.
Would hardly know himself, were he to lose
Both boy and monkey, — and 't was property,
The trouble he had put in Annibal.
He did n't choose another man should beat

His boy and monkey. If they ran away
Some man would snap them up, and square himself
And say they were his goods, — he 'd taught them, — no!
He Roldan had no mind another man
Should fatten by his monkey, and the boy
Should not be kicked by any pair of sticks
Calling himself a juggler." . . .
But the Duke,
Tired of that hammering, signed that it should cease;
Bade Roldan quit all fears, — the boy and ape
Should be safe lodged in Abderahman's tower,
In keeping of the great physician there,
The Duke's most special confidant and friend,
One skilled in taming brutes, and always kind.
The Duke himself this eve would see them lodged.
Roldan must go, — spend no more words, — but go.

A room high up in Abderahman's tower,
A window open to the still warm eve,
And the bright disk of royal Jupiter.
Lamps burning low make little atmospheres
Of light amid the dimness; here and there
Show books and phials, stones and instruments.
In carved dark-oaken chair, unpillowed, sleeps
Right in the rays of Jupiter a small man,
In skull-cap bordered close with crisp gray curls,
And loose black gown showing a neck and breast
Protected by a dim-green amulet;
Pale-faced, with finest nostril wont to breathe
Ethereal passion in a world of thought;
Eyebrows jet-black and firm, yet delicate;
Beard scant and grizzled; mouth shut firm, with curves

So subtly turned to meanings exquisite,
You seem to read them as you read a word
Full-vowelled, long-descended, pregnant, — rich
With legacies from long, laborious lives.
Close by him, like a genius of sleep,
Purrs the gray cat, bridling, with snowy breast.
A loud knock. "Forward!" in clear vocal ring.
Enter the Duke, Pablo, and Annibal.
Exit the cat, retreating toward the dark.

DON SILVA

You slept, Sephardo. I am come too soon.

SEPHARDO

Nay, my lord, it was I who slept too long.
I go to court among the stars to-night,
So bathed my soul beforehand in deep sleep.
But who are these?

DON SILVA

Small guests, for whom I ask
Your hospitality. Their owner comes
Some short time hence to claim them. I am pledged
To keep them safely; so I bring them you,
Trusting your friendship for small animals.

SEPHARDO

Yea, am not I too a small animal?

DON SILVA

I shall be much beholden to your love
If you will be their guardian. I can trust

No other man so well as you. The boy
Will please you with his singing, touches too
The viol wondrously.

SEPHARDO

They are welcome both.
Their names are?

DON SILVA

Pablo, this — this Annibal,
And yet, I hope, no warrior.

SEPHARDO

We 'll make peace.
Come, Pablo, let us loosen our friend's chain.
Deign you, my lord, to sit. Here, Pablo, thou —
Close to my chair. Now Annibal shall choose.

[The cautious monkey, in a Moorish dress,
A tunic white, turban and scymitar,
Wears these stage garments, nay, his very flesh
With silent protest; keeps a neutral air
As aiming at a metaphysic state
'Twixt " is " and " is not; " lets his chain be loosed
By sage Sephardo's hands, sits still at first,
Then trembles out of his neutrality,
Looks up and leaps into Sephardo's lap,
And chatters forth his agitated soul,
Turning to peep at Pablo on the floor.]

SEPHARDO

See, he declares we are at amity!

DON SILVA

No brother sage had read your nature faster.

SEPHARDO

Why, so he *is* a brother sage. Man thinks
Brutes have no wisdom, since they know not his:
Can we divine their world? — the hidden life
That mirrors us as hideous shapeless power,
Cruel supremacy of sharp-edged death,
Or fate that leaves a bleeding mother robbed?
Oh, they have long tradition and swift speech,
Can tell with touches and sharp darting cries
Whole histories of timid races taught
To breathe in terror by red-handed man.

DON SILVA

Ah, you denounce my sport with hawk and hound.
I would not have the angel Gabriel
As hard as you in noting down my sins.

SEPHARDO

Nay, they are virtues for you warriors, —
Hawking and hunting! You are merciful
When you leave killing men to kill the brutes.
But, for the point of wisdom, I would choose
To know the mind that stirs between the wings
Of bees and building wasps, or fills the woods
With myriad murmurs of responsive sense
And true-aimed impulse, rather than to know
The thoughts of warriors.

DON SILVA

Yet they are warriors too, —
Your animals. Your judgment limps, Sephardo:
Death is the king of this world; 't is his park
Where he breeds life to feed him. Cries of pain

Are music for his banquet; and the masque, —
The last grand masque for his diversion, is
The Holy Inquisition.

SEPHARDO

Ay, anon
I may chime in with you. But not the less
My judgment has firm feet. Though death were king,
And cruelty his right-hand minister,
Pity insurgent in some human breasts
Makes spiritual empire, reigns supreme
As persecuted faith in faithful hearts.
Your small physician, weighing ninety pounds,
A petty morsel for a healthy shark,
Will worship mercy throned within his soul
Though all the luminous angels of the stars
Burst into cruel chorus on his ear,
Singing, "We know no mercy." He would cry
"I know it" still, and soothe the frightened bird
And feed the child a-hungered, walk abreast
Of persecuted men, and keep most hate
For rational torturers. There I stand firm.
But you are bitter, and my speech rolls on
Out of your note.

DON SILVA

No, no, I follow you.
I too have that within which I will worship
In spite of — yes, Sephardo, I am bitter.
I need your counsel, foresight, all your aid.
Lay these small guests to bed, then we will talk.

SEPHARDO

See, they are sleeping now. The boy has made
My leg his pillow. For my brother sage,
He 'll never heed us; he knit long ago
A sound ape-system, wherein men are brutes
Emitting doubtful noises. Pray, my lord,
Unlade what burdens you: my ear and hand
Are servants of a heart much bound to you.

DON SILVA

Yes, yours is love that roots in gifts bestowed
By you on others, and will thrive the more
The more it gives. I have a double want:
First a confessor, — not a Catholic;
A heart without a livery, — naked manhood.

SEPHARDO

My lord, I will be frank, there 's no such thing
As naked manhood. If the stars look down
On any mortal of our shape, whose strength
Is to judge all things without preference,
He is a monster, not a faithful man.
While my heart beats, it shall wear livery, —
My people's livery, whose yellow badge
Marks them for Christian scorn. I will not say
Man is first man to me, then Jew or Gentile:
That suits the rich *marranos;* but to me
My father is first father and then man.
So much for frankness' sake. But let that pass.
'T is true at least, I am no Catholic,
But Salomo Sephardo, a born Jew,
Willing to serve Don Silva.

DON SILVA

Oft you sing
Another strain, and melt distinctions down,
As no more real than the wall of dark
Seen by small fishes' eyes, that pierce a span
In the wide ocean. Now you league yourself
To hem me, hold me prisoner in bonds
Made, say you, — how? — by God or Demiurge,
By spirit or flesh, — I care not! Love was made
Stronger than bonds, and where they press must break them.
I came to you that I might breathe at large,
And now you stifle me with talk of birth,
Of race and livery. Yet you knew Fedalma.
She was your friend, Sephardo. And you know
She is gone from me, — know the hounds are loosed
To dog me if I seek her.

SEPHARDO

Yes, I know.
Forgive me that I used untimely speech,
Pressing a bruise. I loved her well, my lord:
A woman mixed of such fine elements
That were all virtue and religion dead
She 'd make them newly, being what she was.

DON SILVA

Was? say not *was,* Sephardo! She still lives, —
Is, and is mine; and I will not renounce
What heaven, nay, what she gave me. I will sin,
If sin I must, to win my life again.
The fault lie with those powers who have embroiled
The world in hopeless conflict, where all truth

Fights manacled with falsehood, and all good
Makes but one palpitating life with evil.

(Don Silva *pauses.* Sephardo *is silent.*)

Sephardo, speak! am I not justified?
You taught my mind to use the wing that soars
Above the petty fences of the herd:
Now, when I need your doctrine, you are dumb.

Sephardo

Patience! Hidalgos want interpreters
Of untold dreams and riddles; they insist
On dateless horoscopes, on formulas
To raise a possible spirit, nowhere named.
Science must be their wishing cap; the stars
Speak plainer for high largesse. No, my lord!
I cannot counsel you to unknown deeds.
Thus much I can divine: you wish to find
Her whom you love, — to make a secret search.

Don Silva

That is begun already: a messenger
Unknown to all has been despatched this night.
But forecast must be used, a plan devised,
Ready for service when my scout returns,
Bringing the invisible thread to guide my steps
Toward that lost self my life is aching with.
Sephardo, I will go: and I must go
Unseen by all save you; though, at our need,
We may trust Alvar.

Sephardo

A grave task, my lord.
Have you a shapen purpose, or mere will
That sees the end alone and not the means?
Resolve will melt no rocks.

DON SILVA

But it can scale them.
This fortress has two private issues: one,
Which served the Gypsies' flight, to me is closed:
Our bands must watch the outlet, now betrayed
To cunning enemies. Remains one other,
Known to no man save me: a secret left
As heirloom in our house: a secret safe
Even from him, — from Father Isidor.
'T is he who forces me to use it, — he:
All 's virtue that cheats bloodhounds. Hear, Sephardo.
Given, my scout returns and brings me news
I can straight act on, I shall want your aid.
The issue lies below this tower, your fastness,
Where, by my charter, you rule absolute.
I shall feign illness; you with mystic air
Must speak of treatment asking vigilance
(Nay, I *am* ill, — my life has half ebbed out).
I shall be whimsical, devolve command
On Don Diego, speak of poisoning,
Insist on being lodged within this tower,
And rid myself of tendance save from you
And perhaps from Alvar. So I shall escape
Unseen by spies, shall win the days I need
To ransom her and have her safe enshrined.
No matter, were my flight disclosed at last:
I shall come back as from a duel fought
Which no man can undo. Now you know all.
Say, can I count on you?

SEPHARDO

For faithfulness
In aught that I may promise — yes, my lord.
But—for a pledge of faithfulness—this warning.

I will betray naught for your personal harm:
I love you. But note this, — I am a Jew;
And while the Christian persecutes my race,
I 'll turn at need even the Christian's trust
Into a weapon and a shield for Jews.
Shall Cruelty crowned — wielding the savage force
Of multitudes, and calling savageness God
Who gives it victory — upbraid deceit
And ask for faithfulness? I love you well.
You are my friend. But yet you are a Christian,
Whose birth has bound you to the Catholic kings.
There may come moments when to share my joy
Would make you traitor, when to share your grief
Would make me other than a Jew . . .

DON SILVA

What need
To urge that now, Sephardo? I am one
Of many Spanish nobles who detest
The roaring bigotry of the herd, would fain
Dash from the lips of king and queen the cup
Filled with besotting venom, half infused
By avarice and half by priests. And now, —
Now when the cruelty you flout me with
Pierces me too in the apple of my eye,
Now when my kinship scorches me like hate
Flashed from a mother's eye, you choose this time
To talk of birth as of inherited rage
Deep-down, volcanic, fatal, bursting forth
From under hard-taught reason? Wondrous friendship!
My uncle Isidor's echo, mocking me,
From the opposing quarter of the heavens,
With iteration of the thing I know,
That I 'm a Christian knight and Spanish noble!

The consequence? Why, that I know. It lies
In my own hands and not on raven tongues.
The knight and noble shall not wear the chain
Of false-linked thoughts in brains of other men.
What question was there 'twixt us two, of aught
That makes division? When I come to you
I come for other doctrine than the Prior's.

SEPHARDO

My lord, you are o'erwrought by pain. My words,
That carried innocent meaning, do but float
Like little emptied cups upon the flood
Your mind brings with it. I but answered you
With regular proviso, such as stands
In testaments and charters, to forefend
A possible case which none deem likelihood;
Just turned my sleeve, and pointed to the brand
Of brotherhood that limits every pledge.
Superfluous nicety, — the student's trick,
Who will not drink until he can define
What water is and is not. But enough.
My will to serve you now knows no division
Save the alternate beat of love and fear.
There 's danger in this quest, — name, honour,
life, —
My lord, the stake is great, and are you sure . . .

DON SILVA

No, I am sure of naught but this, Sephardo,
That I will go. Prudence is but conceit
Hoodwinked by ignorance. There 's naught exists
That is not dangerous and holds not death
For souls or bodies. Prudence turns its helm
To flee the storm and lands 'mid pestilence.
Wisdom must end by throwing dice with folly

But for dire passion which alone makes choice.
And I have chosen as the lion robbed
Chooses to turn upon the ravisher.
If love were slack, the Prior's imperious will
Would move it to outmatch him. But, Sephardo,
Were all else mute, all passive as sea-calms,
My soul is one great hunger, — I must see her.
Now you are smiling. Oh, you merciful men
Pick up coarse griefs and fling them in the face
Of us whom life with long descent has trained
To subtler pains, mocking your ready balms.
You smile at my soul's hunger.

SEPHARDO

Science smiles
And sways our lips in spite of us, my lord,
When thought weds fact, — when maiden prophecy
Waiting, believing, sees the bridal torch.
I use not vulgar measures for your grief,
My pity keeps no cruel feasts; but thought
Has joys apart, even in blackest woe,
And seizing some fine thread of verity
Knows momentary godhead.

DON SILVA

And your thought?

SEPHARDO

Seized on the close agreement of your words
With what is written in your horoscope.

DON SILVA

Reach it me now.

SEPHARDO

By your leave, Annibal.

(*He places* ANNIBAL *on* PABLO'S *lap and rises. The boy moves without waking, and his head falls on the opposite side.* SEPHARDO *fetches a cushion and lays* PABLO'S *head gently down upon it, then goes to reach the parchment from a cabinet.* ANNIBAL, *having waked up in alarm, shuts his eyes quickly again and pretends to sleep.*)

DON SILVA

I wish, by new appliance of your skill,
Reading afresh the records of the sky,
You could detect more special augury.
Such chance oft happens, for all characters
Must shrink or widen, as our wine-skins do,
For more or less that we can pour in them;
And added years give ever a new key
To fixed prediction.

SEPHARDO (*returning with the parchment and reseating himself*)

True; our growing thought
Makes growing revelation. But demand not
Specific augury, as of sure success
In meditated projects, or of ends
To be foreknown by peeping in God's scroll.
I say — nay, Ptolemy said it, but wise books
For half the truths they hold are honoured tombs —
Prediction is contingent, of effects
Where causes and concomitants are mixed
To seeming wealth of possibilities

Beyond our reckoning. Who will pretend
To tell the adventures of each single fish
Within the Syrian Sea? Show me a fish,
I 'll weigh him, tell his kind, what he devoured,
What would have devoured *him,* — but for one Blas
Who netted him instead; nay, could I tell
That had Blas missed him, he would not have died
Of poisonous mud, and so made carrion,
Swept off at last by some sea-scavenger?

DON SILVA

Ay, now you talk of fishes, you get hard.
I note you merciful men: you can endure
Torture of fishes and hidalgos. Follows?

SEPHARDO

By how much, then, the fortunes of a man
Are made of elements refined and mixed
Beyond a tunny's, what our science tells
Of the stars' influence hath contingency
In special issues. Thus, the loadstone draws,
Acts like a will to make the iron submiss;
But garlic rubbing it, that chief effect
Lies in suspense; the iron keeps at large,
And garlic is controller of the stone.
And so, my lord, your horoscope declares
Naught absolutely of your sequent lot,
But, by our lore's authentic rules, sets forth
What gifts, what dispositions, likelihoods,
The aspects of the heavens conspired to fuse
With your incorporate soul. Aught more than this
Is vulgar doctrine. For the ambient,

Though a cause regnant, is not absolute,
But suffers a determining restraint
From action of the subject qualities
In proximate motion.

DON SILVA

Yet you smiled just now
At some close fitting of my horoscope
With present fact, — with this resolve of mine
To quit the fortress?

SEPHARDO

Nay, not so, I smiled,
Observing how the temper of your soul
Sealed long tradition of the influence shed
By the heavenly spheres. Here is your horoscope:
The aspects of the moon with Mars conjunct,
Of Venus and the Sun with Saturn, lord
Of the ascendant, make symbolic speech
Whereto your words gave running paraphrase.

DON SILVA (*impatiently*)

What did I say?

SEPHARDO

You spoke as oft you did
When I was schooling you at Córdova,
And lessons on the noun and verb were drowned
With sudden stream of general debate
On things and actions. Always in that stream
I saw the play of babbling currents, saw
A nature o'er-endowed with opposites
Making a self alternate, where each hour
Was critic of the last, each mood too strong

For tolerance of its fellow in close yoke.
The ardent planets stationed as supreme,
Potent in action, suffer light malign
From luminaries large and coldly bright
Inspiring meditative doubt, which straight
Doubts of itself, by interposing act
Of Jupiter in the fourth house fortified
With power ancestral. So, my lord, I read
The changeless in the changing; so I read
The constant action of celestial powers
Mixed into waywardness of mortal men,
Whereof no sage's eye can trace the course
And see the close.

DON SILVA

Fruitful result, O sage!
Certain uncertainty.

SEPHARDO

Yea, a result
Fruitful as seeded earth, where certainty
Would be as barren as a globe of gold.
I love you, and would serve you well, my lord.
Your rashness vindicates itself too much,
Puts harshness on of cobweb theory
While rushing like a cataract. Be warned.
Resolve with you is a fire-breathing steed,
But it sees visions, and may feel the air
Impassable with thoughts that come too late,
Rising from out the grave of murdered honour.
Look at your image in your horoscope:

(*Laying the horoscope before* SILVA)

You are so mixed, my lord, that each to-day
May seem a maniac to its morrow.

DON SILVA (*pushing away the horoscope, rising and turning to look out at the open window*)

No!
No morrow e'er will say that I am mad
Not to renounce her. Risks! I know them all.
I 've dogged each lurking, ambushed consequence.
I 've handled every chance to know its shape
As blind men handle bolts. Oh, I 'm too sane,
I see the Prior's nets. He does my deed;
For he has narrowed all my life to this, —
That I must find her by some hidden means.

(*He turns and stands close in front of* SEPHARDO.)

One word, Sephardo, — leave that horoscope,
Which is but iteration of myself,
And give me promise. Shall I count on you
To act upon my signal? Kings of Spain
Like me have found their refuge in a Jew,
And trusted in his counsel. You will help me?

SEPHARDO

Yes, my lord, I will help you. Israel
Is to the nations as the body's heart:
Thus saith the Book of Light: and I will act
So that no man may ever say through me
" Your Israel is naught," and make my deeds
The mud they fling upon my brethren.
I will not fail you, save, — you know the terms:
I am a Jew, and not that infamous life
That takes on bastardy, will know no father,
So shrouds itself in the pale abstract, Man.
You should be sacrificed to Israel
If Israel needed it.

DON SILVA

I fear not that.
I am no friend of fines and banishment,
Or flames that, fed on heretics, still gape,
And must have heretics made to feed them still.
I take your terms, and, for the rest, your love
Will not forsake me.

SEPHARDO

'T is hard Roman love,
That looks away and stretches forth the sword
Bared for its master's breast to run upon.
But you will have it so. Love shall obey.

(SILVA *turns to the window again, and is silent for a few moments, looking at the sky.*)

DON SILVA

See now, Sephardo, you would keep no faith
To smooth the path of cruelty. Confess,
The deed I would not do, save for the strait
Another brings me to (quit my command,
Resign it for brief space, I mean no more), —
Were that deed branded, then the brand should fix
On him who urged me.

SEPHARDO

Will it, though, my lord?

DON SILVA

I speak not of the fact, but of the right.

SEPHARDO

My lord, you said but now you were resolved.
Question not if the world will be unjust

Branding your deed. If conscience has two courts
With differing verdicts, where shall lie the appeal?
Our law must be without us or within.
The Highest speaks through all our people's voice,
Custom, tradition, and old sanctities;
Or he reveals himself by new decrees
Of inward certitude.

DON SILVA

My love for her
Makes highest law, must be the voice of God.

SEPHARDO

I thought, but now, you seemed to make excuse,
And plead as in some court where Spanish knights
Are tried by other laws than those of love.

DON SILVA

'T was momentary. I shall dare it all.
How the great planet glows, and looks at me,
And seems to pierce me with his effluence!
Were he a living God, these rays that stir
In me the pulse of wonder were in him
Fulness of knowledge. Are you certified,
Sephardo, that the astral science shrinks
To such pale ashes, dead symbolic forms
For that congenital mixture of effects
Which life declares without the aid of lore?
If there are times propitious or malign
To our first framing, then must all events
Have favouring periods: you cull your plants
By signal of the heavens, then why not trace
As others would by astrologic rule
Times of good augury for momentous acts, —
As secret journeys?

SEPHARDO

O my lord, the stars
Act not as witchcraft or as muttered spells.
I said before they are not absolute,
And tell no fortunes. I adhere alone
To such tradition of their agencies
As reason fortifies.

DON SILVA

A barren science!
Some argue now 't is folly. 'T were as well
Be of their mind. If those bright stars had will, —
But they are fatal fires, and know no love.
Of old, I think, the world was happier
With many gods, who held a struggling life
As mortals do, and helped men in the straits
Of forced misdoing. I doubt that horoscope.

(DON SILVA *turns from the window and reseats himself opposite* SEPHARDO.)

I am most self-contained, and strong to bear.
No man save you has seen my trembling lip
Uttering her name, since she was lost to me.
I 'll face the progeny of all my deeds.

SEPHARDO

May they be fair! No horoscope makes slaves.
'T is but a mirror, shows one image forth,
And leaves the future dark with endless " ifs."

DON SILVA

I marvel, my Sephardo, you can pinch
With confident selection these few grains,

And call them verity, from out the dust
Of crumbling error. Surely such thought creeps,
With insect exploration of the world.
Were I a Hebrew, now, I would be bold.
Why should you fear, not being Catholic?

SEPHARDO

Lo! you yourself, my lord, mix subtleties
With gross belief; by momentary lapse
Conceive, with all the vulgar, that we Jews
Must hold ourselves God's outlaws, and defy
All good with blasphemy, because we hold
Your good is evil; think we must turn pale
To see our portraits painted in your hell,
And sin the more for knowing we are lost.

DON SILVA

Read not my words with malice. I but meant,
My temper hates an over-cautious march.

SEPHARDO

The Unnamable made not the search for truth
To suit hidalgos' temper. I abide
By that wise spirit of listening reverence
Which marks the boldest doctors of our race.
For truth, to us, is like a living child
Born of two parents: if the parents part
And will divide the child, how shall it live?
Or, I will rather say: Two angels guide
The path of man, both aged and yet young,
As angels are, ripening through endless years.
On one he leans: some call her Memory,
And some, Tradition; and her voice is sweet,
With deep mysterious accords: the other,
Floating above, holds down a lamp which streams

A light divine and searching on the earth,
Compelling eyes and footsteps. Memory yields,
Yet clings with loving check, and shines anew
Reflecting all the rays of that bright lamp
Our angel Reason holds. We had not walked
But for Tradition; we walk evermore
To higher paths, by brightening Reason's lamp.
Still we are purblind, tottering. I hold less
Than Aben-Ezra, of that aged lore
Brought by long centuries from Chaldæan plains;
The Jew-taught Florentine rejects it all.
For still the light is measured by the eye,
And the weak organ fails. I may see ill;
But over all belief is faithfulness,
Which fulfils vision with obedience.
So, I must grasp my morsels: truth is oft
Scattered in fragments round a stately pile
Built half of error; and the eye's defect
May breed too much denial. But, my lord,
I weary your sick soul. Go now with me
Into the turret. We will watch the spheres,
And see the constellations bend and plunge
Into a depth of being where our eyes
Hold them no more. We 'll quit ourselves
and be
The red Aldebaran or bright Sirius,
And sail as in a solemn voyage, bound
On some great quest we know not.

DON SILVA

Let us go.
She may be watching too, and thought of her
Sways me, as if she knew, to every act
Of pure allegiance.

SEPHARDO

That is love's perfection, —
Tuning the soul to all her harmonies
So that no chord can jar. Now we will mount.
(*Exeunt.*)

A large hall in the Castle, of Moorish architecture. On the side where the windows are, an outer gallery. Pages and other young gentlemen attached to DON SILVA'S *household, gathered chiefly at one end of the hall. Some are moving about; others are lounging on the carved benches; others, half stretched on pieces of matting and carpet, are gambling.* ARIAS, *a stripling of fifteen, sings by snatches in a boyish treble, as he walks up and down, and tosses back the nuts which another youth flings towards him. In the middle* DON AMADOR, *a gaunt, gray-haired soldier, in a handsome uniform, sits in a marble red-cushioned chair, with a large book spread out on his knees, from which he is reading aloud, while his voice is half drowned by the talk that is going on around him, first one voice and then another surging above the hum.*

ARIAS (*singing*)

There was a holy hermit
Who counted all things loss
For Christ his Master's glory:
He made an ivory cross,
And as he knelt before it
And wept his murdered Lord,
The ivory turned to iron,
The cross became a sword.

JOSÉ (*from the floor*)

I say, twenty cruzados! thy Galician wit
Can never count.

HERNANDO (*also from the floor*)

And thy Sevillian wit always counts double.

ARIAS (*singing*)

The tears that fell upon it,
They turned to red, red rust,
The tears that fell from off it
Made writing in the dust.
The holy hermit, gazing,
Saw words upon the ground:
"The sword be red forever
With the blood of false Mahound."

DON AMADOR (*looking up from his book, and raising his voice*)

What, gentlemen! Our glorious Lady defend us!

ENRIQUEZ (*from the benches*)

Serves the infidels right! They have sold Christians enough to people half the towns in Paradise. If the Queen, now, had divided the pretty damsels of Malaga among the Castilians who have been helping in the holy war, and not sent half of them to Naples . . .

ARIAS (*singing again*)

At the battle of Clavijo
In the days of King Ramiro,
Help us, Allah! cried the Moslem,
Cried the Spaniard, Heaven's chosen,
God and Santiago!

FABIAN

Oh, the very tail of our chance has vanished. The royal army is breaking up, — going home for the winter. The Grand Master sticks to his own border.

ARIAS (*singing*)

Straight out-flushing like the rainbow,
See him come, celestial Baron,
Mounted knight, with red-crossed banner,
Plunging earthward to the battle,
Glorious Santiago!

HURTADO

Yes, yes, through the pass of By-and-by you go to the valley of Never. We might have done a great feat, if the Marquis of Cadiz . . .

ARIAS (*sings*)

As the flame before the swift wind,
See, he fires us, we burn with him!
Flash our swords, dash Pagans backward, —
Victory he! pale fear is allah!
God with Santiago!

DON AMADOR (*raising his voice to a cry*)

Sangre de Dios, gentlemen!

(*He shuts the book, and lets it fall with a bang on the floor. There is instant silence.*)

To what good end is it that I, who studied at Salamanca, and can write verses agreeable to the glorious Lady with the point of a sword which hath done harder service, am reading aloud in a

clerkly manner from a book which hath been culled from the flowers of all books, to instruct you in the knowledge befitting those who would be knights and worthy hidalgos. I had as lief be reading in a belfry. And gambling too! As if it were a time when we needed not the help of God and the saints! Surely for the space of one hour ye might subdue your tongues to your ears that so your tongues might learn somewhat of civility and modesty. Wherefore am I master of the Duke's retinue, if my voice is to run along like a gutter in a storm?

HURTADO (*lifting up the book, and respectfully presenting it to* DON AMADOR)

Pardon, Don Amador! The air is so commoved by your voice, that it stirs our tongues in spite of us.

DON AMADOR (*reopening the book*)

Confess, now, it is a goose-headed trick, that when rational sounds are made for your edification, you find naught in it but an occasion for purposeless gabble. I will report it to the Duke, and the reading-time shall be doubled, and my office of reader shall be handed over to Fray Domingo.

(*While* DON AMADOR *has been speaking,* DON SILVA, *with* DON ALVAR, *has appeared walking in the outer gallery on which the windows are opened.*)

ALL (*in concert*)

No, no, no.

DON AMADOR

Are ye ready, then, to listen, if I finish the wholesome extract from the Seven Parts, wherein the wise King Alfonso hath set down the reason why knights should be of gentle birth? Will ye now be silent?

ALL

Yes, silent.

DON AMADOR

But when I pause, and look up, I give any leave to speak, if he hath aught pertinent to say.

(*Reads*)

"And this nobility cometh in three ways: *first,* by lineage; *secondly*, by science; and *thirdly,* by valour and worthy behaviour. Now, although they who gain nobility through science or good deeds are rightfully called noble and gentle; nevertheless, they are with the highest fitness so called who are noble by ancient lineage, and lead a worthy life as by inheritage from afar; and hence are more bound and constrained to act well, and guard themselves from error and wrong-doing; for in their case it is more true that by evil-doing they bring injury and shame not only on themselves, but also on those from whom they are derived."

(DON AMADOR *places his forefinger for a mark on the page, and looks up, while he keeps his voice raised, as wishing* DON SILVA *to overhear him in the judicious discharge of his function.*)

Hear ye that, young gentlemen? See ye not that if ye had but bad manners even, they disgrace you more than gross misdoings disgrace the low-born? Think you, Arias, it becomes the son of your house irreverently to sing and fling nuts, to the interruption of your elders?

ARIAS (*sitting on the floor and leaning backward on his elbows*)

Nay, Don Amador; King Alfonso, they say, was a heretic, and I think that is not true writing. For noble birth gives us more leave to do ill if we like.

DON AMADOR (*lifting his brows*)

What bold and blasphemous talk is this?

ARIAS

Why, nobles are only punished now and then, in a grand way, and have their heads cut off, like the Grand Constable. I should n't mind that.

JOSÉ

Nonsense, Arias! nobles have their heads cut off because their crimes are noble. If they did what was unknightly, they would come to shame. Is n't that true, Don Amador?

DON AMADOR

Arias is a contumacious puppy, who will bring dishonour on his parentage. Pray, sirrah, whom did you ever hear speak as you have spoken?

ARIAS

Nay, I speak out of my own head. I shall go and ask the Duke.

HURTADO

Now, now! you are too bold, Arias.

ARIAS

Oh, he is never angry with me (*dropping his voice*), because the Lady Fedalma liked me. She said I was a good boy, and pretty, and that is what you are not, Hurtado.

HURTADO

Girl-face! See, now, if you dare ask the Duke.

(DON SILVA *is just entering the hall from the gallery, with* ALVAR *behind him, intending to pass out at the other end. All rise with homage.* DON SILVA *bows coldly and abstractedly.* ARIAS *advances from the group, and goes up to* DON SILVA.)

ARIAS

My lord, is it true that a noble is more dishonoured than other men if he does aught dishonourable?

DON SILVA (*first blushing deeply, and grasping his sword, then raising his hand and giving* ARIAS *a blow on the ear*)

Varlet!

ARIAS

My lord, I am a gentleman.

(DON SILVA *pushes him away, and passes on hurriedly.*)

DON ALVAR (*following and turning to speak*)

Go, go! you should not speak to the Duke when you are not called upon. He is ill and much distempered.

(ARIAS *retires, flushed, with tears in his eyes. His companions look too much surprised to triumph.* DON AMADOR *remains silent and confused.*)

The Plaça Santiago during busy market-time. Mules and asses laden with fruits and vegetables. Stalls and booths filled with wares of all sorts. A crowd of buyers and sellers. A stalwart woman with keen eyes, leaning over the panniers of a mule laden with apples, watches LORENZO, *who is lounging through the market. As he approaches her, he is met by* BLASCO.

LORENZO

Well met, friend.

BLASCO

Ay, for we are soon to part,
And I would see you at the hostelry,
To take my reckoning. I go forth to-day.

LORENZO

'T is grievous parting with good company.
I would I had the gold to pay such guests
For all my pleasure in their talk.

BLASCO

Why, yes;
A solid-headed man of Aragon
Has matter in him that you Southerners lack.
You like my company, — 't is natural.
But, look you, I have done my business well,
Have sold and ta'en commissions. I come straight
From — you know who — I like not naming him.
I 'm a thick man: you reach not my backbone
With any toothpick. But I tell you this:
He reached it with his eye, right to the marrow!
It gave me heart that I had plate to sell,
For, saint or no saint, a good silversmith
Is wanted for God's service; and my plate —
He judged it well — bought nobly.

LORENZO

A great man,
And holy!

BLASCO

Yes, I 'm glad I leave to-day.
For there are stories give a sort of smell, —
One's nose has fancies. A good trader, sir,
Likes not this plague of lapsing in the air,
Most caught by men with funds. And they *do* say
There 's a great terror here in Moors and Jews,
I would say, Christians of unhappy blood.
'T is monstrous, sure, that men of substance lapse,
And risk their property. I know I 'm sound.
No heresy was ever bait to me. Whate'er
Is the right faith, that I believe, — naught else.

LORENZO

Ay, truly, for the flavour of true faith
Once known must sure be sweetest to the taste.
But an uneasy mood is now abroad
Within the town; partly, for that the Duke
Being sorely sick, has yielded the command
To Don Diego, a most valiant man,
More Catholic than the Holy Father's self,
Half chiding God that he will tolerate
A Jew of Arab; though 't is plain they 're made
For profit of good Christians. And weak heads —
Panic will knit all disconnected facts —
Draw hence belief in evil auguries,
Rumours of accusation and arrest,
All air-begotten. Sir, you need not go.
But if it must be so, I 'll follow you
In fifteen minutes, — finish marketing,
Then be at home to speed you on your way.

BLASCO

Do so. I 'll back to Saragossa straight.
The court and nobles are retiring now
And wending northward. There 'll be fresh demand
For bells and images against the Spring,
When doubtless our great Catholic sovereigns
Will move to conquest of these eastern parts,
And cleanse Granada from the infidel.
Stay, sir, with God until we meet again!

LORENZO

Go, sir, with God, until I follow you!

(*Exit* BLASCO. LORENZO *passes on towards the market-woman, who, as he approaches, raises herself from her leaning attitude.*)

LORENZO

Good day, my mistress. How 's your merchandise?
Fit for a host to buy? Your apples now,
They have fair cheeks; how are they at the core?

MARKET-WOMAN

Good, good, sir! Taste and try. See, here is one
Weighs a man's head. The best are bound with tow:
They 're worth the pains, to keep the peel from splits.

(*She takes out an apple bound with tow, and, as she puts it into* LORENZO's *hand, speaks in a lower tone.*)

'T is called the Miracle. You open it,
And find it full of speech.

LORENZO

Ay, give it me,
I 'll take it to the Doctor in the tower.
He feeds on fruit, and if he likes the sort
I 'll buy them for him. Meanwhile, drive your ass
Round to my hostelry. I 'll straight be there.
You 'll not refuse some barter?

MARKET-WOMAN

No, not I.
Feathers and skins.

LORENZO

Good, till we met again.

(LORENZO, *after smelling at the apple, puts it into a pouch-like basket which hangs before him, and walks away. The woman drives off the mule.*)

A Letter

"Zarca, the chief of the Zincali, greets
The King El Zagal. Let the force be sent
With utmost swiftness to the Pass of Luz.
A good five hundred added to my bands
Will master all the garrison: the town
Is half with us, and will not lift an arm
Save on our side. My scouts have found a way
Where once we thought the fortress most secure:
Spying a man upon the height, they traced,
By keen conjecture piercing broken sight,
His downward path, and found its issue. There
A file of us can mount, surprise the fort
And give the signal to our friends within
To ope the gates for our confederate bands,
Who will lie eastward ambushed by the rocks,
Waiting the night. Enough; give me command,
Bedmár is yours. Chief Zarca will redeem
His pledge of highest service to the Moor:
Let the Moor, too, be faithful and repay
The Gypsy with the furtherance he needs
To lead his people over Bahr el Scham
And plant them on the shore of Africa.
So may the King El Zagal live as one
Who, trusting Allah will be true to him,
Maketh himself as Allah true to friends."

BOOK III

QUIT now the town, and with a journeying dream
Swift as the wings of sound yet seeming slow
Through multitudinous compression of stored sense
And spiritual space, see walls and towers
Lie in the silent whiteness of a trance,
Giving no sign of that warm life within
That moves and murmurs through their hidden heart.
Pass o'er the mountain, wind in sombre shade,
Then wind into the light and see the town
Shrunk to white crust upon the darken rock.
Turn east and south, descend, then rise anew
'Mid smaller mountains ebbing towards the plain:
Scent the fresh breath of the height-loving herbs
That, trodden by the pretty parted hoofs
Of nimble goats, sigh at the innocent bruise,
And with a mingled difference exquisite
Pour a sweet burden on the buoyant air.
Pause now and be all ear. Far from the south,
Seeking the listening silence of the heights,
Comes a slow-dying sound, — the Moslems' call
To prayer in afternoon. Bright in the sun
Like tall white sails on a green shadowy sea
Stand Moorish watch-towers: 'neath that eastern sky
Couches unseen the strength of Moorish Baza:
Where the meridian bends lies Guadix, hold
Of brave El Zagal. This is Moorish land,
Where Allah lives unconquered in dark breasts
And blesses still the many-nourishing earth
With dark-armed industry. See from the steep

The scattered olives hurry in gray throngs
Down towards the valley, where the little stream
Parts a green hollow 'twixt the gentler slopes;
And in that hollow, dwellings: not white homes
Of building Moors, but little swarthy tents
Such as of old perhaps on Asian plains,
Or wending westward past the Caucasus,
Our fathers raised to rest in. Close they swarm
About two taller tents, and viewed afar
Might seem a dark-robed crowd in penitence
That silent kneel; but come now in their midst
And watch a busy, bright-eyed, sportive life!
Tall maidens bend to feed the tethered goat,
The ragged kirtle fringing at the knee
Above the living curves, the shoulder's smoothness
Parting the torrent strong of ebon hair.
Women with babes, the wild and neutral glance
Swayed now to sweet desire of mothers' eyes,
Rock their strong cradling arms and chant low strains
Taught by monotonous and soothing winds
That fall at night-time on the dozing ear.
The crones plait reeds, or shred the vivid herbs
Into the caldron: tiny urchins crawl
Or sit and gurgle forth their infant joy.
Lads lying sphinx-like with uplifted breast
Propped on their elbows, their black manes tossed back,
Fling up the coin and watch its fatal fall,
Dispute and scramble, run and wrestle fierce,
Then fall to play and fellowship again;
Or in a thieving swarm they run to plague
The grandsires, who return with rabbits slung,
And with the mules fruit-laden from the fields.
Some striplings choose the smooth stones from the brook

To serve the slingers, cut the twigs for snares,
Or trim the hazel-wands, or at the bark
Of some exploring dog they dart away
With swift precision towards a moving speck.
These are the brood of Zarca's Gypsy tribe;
Most like an earth-born race bred by the Sun
On some rich tropic soil, the father's light
Flashing in coal black eyes, the mother's blood
With bounteous elements feeding their young limbs.
The stalwart men and youths are at the wars
Following their chief, all save a trusty band
Who keep strict watch along the northern heights.

But see, upon a pleasant spot removed
From the camp's hubbub, where the thicket strong
Of huge-eared cactus makes a bordering curve
And casts a shadow, lies a sleeping man
With Spanish hat screening his upturned face,
His doublet loose, his right arm backward flung,
His left caressing close the long-necked lute
That seems to sleep too, leaning tow'rds its lord.
He draws deep breath secure but not unwatched.
Moving a-tiptoe, silent as the elves,
As mischievous too, trip three barefooted girls
Not opened yet to womanhood, — dark flowers
In slim long buds: some paces farther off
Gathers a little white-teethed shaggy group,
A grinning chorus to the merry play.
The tripping girls have robbed the sleeping man
Of all his ornaments. Hita is decked
With an embroidered scarf across her rags;
Tralla, with thorns for pins, sticks two rosettes
Upon her threadbare woollen; Hinda now,
Prettiest and boldest, tucks her kirtle up
As wallet for the stolen buttons, — then
Bends with her knife to cut from off the hat

The aigrette and the feather; deftly cuts,
Yet wakes the sleeper, who with sudden start
Shakes off the masking hat and shows the face
Of Juan: Hinda swift as thought leaps back,
But carries off the feather and aigrette,
And leads the chorus of a happy laugh,
Running with all the naked-footed imps,
Till with safe survey all can face about
And watch for signs of stimulating chase,
While Hinda ties long grass around her brow
To stick the feather in with majesty.
Juan still sits contemplative, with looks
Alternate at the spoilers and their work.

JUAN

Ah, you marauding kite, — my feather gone!
My belt, my scarf, my buttons and rosettes!
This is to be a brother of Zincali!
The fiery-blooded children of the Sun, —
So says chief Zarca, — children of the Sun!
Ay, ay, the black and stinging flies he breeds
To plague the decent body of mankind.
Orpheus, professor of the *gai saber*,
Made all the brutes polite, they say, by dint of song.
Pregnant, — but as a guide in daily life
Delusive. For if song and music cure
The barbarous trick of thieving, 't is a cure
That works as slowly as old Doctor Time
In curing folly. Why, the minxes there
Have rhythm in their toes, and music rings
As readily from them as from little bells
Swung by the breeze. Well, I will try the physic.

(*He touches his lute.*)

Hem! taken rightly, any single thing
The Rabbis say, implies all other things.

A knotty task, though, the unravelling
Meum and *Tuum* from a saraband:
It needs a subtle logic, nay, perhaps,
A good large property, to see the thread.

(*He touches the lute again.*)

There 's more of odd than even in this world,
Else pretty sinners would not be let off
Sooner than ugly; for if honeycombs
Are to be got by stealing, they should go
Where life is bitterest on the tongue. And yet, —
Because this minx has pretty ways I wink
At all her tricks, though if a flat-faced lass,
With eyes askew, were half as bold as she,
I should chastise her with a hazel switch.
I 'm a plucked peacock, — even my voice and wit
Without a tail! — why, any fool detects
The absence of your tail, but twenty fools
May not detect the presence of your wit.

(*He touches his lute again.*)

Well, I must coax my tail back cunningly,
For to run after these brown lizards, — ah!
I think the lizards lift their ears at this.

(*As he thrums his lute the lads and girls gradually approach: he touches it more briskly, and* HINDA, *advancing, begins to move arms and legs with an initiatory dancing movement, smiling coaxingly at* JUAN. *He suddenly stops, lays down his lute and folds his arms.*)

What, you expected a tune to dance to, eh?

HINDA, HITA, TRALLA, AND THE REST (*clapping their hands*)

Yes, yes, a tune, a tune!

JUAN

But that is what you cannot have, my sweet brothers and sisters. The tunes are all dead, — dead as the tunes of the lark when you have plucked his wings off; dead as the song of the grasshopper when the ass has swallowed him. I can play and sing no more. Hinda has killed my tunes.

(*All cry out in consternation.* HINDA *gives a wail and tries to examine the lute.* JUAN *waves her off.*)

Understand, Señora Hinda, that the tunes are in me; they are not in the lute till I put them there. And if you cross my humour, I shall be as tuneless as a bag of wool. If the tunes are to be brought to life again, I must have my feather back.

(HINDA *kisses his hands and feet coaxingly.*)

No, no! not a note will come for coaxing. The feather, I say, the feather!

(HINDA *sorrowfully takes off the feather, and gives it to* JUAN.)

Ah, now let us see. Perhaps a tune will come.

(*He plays a measure, and the three girls begin to dance; then he suddenly stops.*)

No, the tune will not come: it wants the aigrette (*pointing to it on* HINDA'S *neck*).

(HINDA, *with rather less hesitation, but again sorrowfully, takes off the aigrette, and gives it to him.*)

Ha! (*he plays again, but, after rather a longer time, again stops.*) No, no; 't is the buttons are wanting, Hinda, the buttons. This tune feeds

chiefly on buttons, — a hungry tune. It wants one, two, three, four, five, six. Good!

(*After* HINDA *has given up the buttons, and* JUAN *has laid them down one by one, he begins to play again, going on longer than before, so that the dancers become excited by the movement. Then he stops.*)

Ah, Hita, it is the belt, and, Tralla, the rosettes, — both are wanting. I see the tune will not go on without them.

(HITA *and* TRALLA *take off the belt and rosettes, and lay them down quickly, being fired by the dancing, and eager for the music. All the articles lie by* JUAN'S *side on the ground.*)

Good, good, my docile wild-cats! Now I think the tunes are all alive again. Now you may dance and sing too. Hinda, my little screamer, lead off with the song I taught you, and let us see if the tune will go right on from beginning to end.

(*He plays. The dance begins again,* HINDA *singing. All the other boys and girls join in the chorus, and all at last dance wildly.*)

SONG

All things journey: sun and moon,
Morning, noon, and afternoon,
Night and all her stars:
'Twixt the east and western bars
Round they journey,
Come and go!
We go with them!
For to roam and ever roam
Is the wild Zincali's home.

Earth is good, the hillside breaks
By the ashen roots and makes
Hungry nostrils glad:
Then we run till we are mad,
Like the horses,
And we cry,
None shall catch us!
Swift winds wing us, — we are free, —
Drink the air, — Zincali we!

Falls the snow: the pine-branch split,
Call the fire out, see it flit,
Through the dry leaves run,
Spread and glow, and make a sun
In the dark tent:
O warm dark!
Warm as conies!
Strong fire loves us, we are warm!
Who shall work Zincali harm?

Onward journey: fires are spent;
Sunward, sunward! lift the tent,
Run before the rain,
Through the pass, along the plain.
Hurry, hurry,
Lift us, wind!
Like the horses.
For to roam and ever roam
Is the wild Zincali's home.

(*When the dance is at its height,* HINDA *breaks away from the rest, and dances round* JUAN, *who is now standing. As he turns a little to watch her movement, some of the boys skip towards the feather, aigrette, &c., snatch them up, and run*

away, swiftly followed by HITA, TRALLA, *and the rest.* HINDA, *as she turns again, sees them, screams, and falls in her whirling; but immediately gets up, and rushes after them, still screaming with rage.*)

JUAN

Santiago! these imps get bolder. Haha! Señora Hinda, this finishes your lesson in ethics. You have seen the advantage of giving up stolen goods. Now you see the ugliness of thieving when practised by others. That fable of mine about the tunes was excellently devised. I feel like an ancient sage instructing our lisping ancestors. My memory will descend as the Orpheus of Gypsies. But I must prepare a rod for those rascals. I 'll bastinado them with prickly pears. It seems to me these needles will have a sound moral teaching in them.

(*While* JUAN *takes a knife from his belt, and surveys the prickly pear,* HINDA *returns.*)

JUAN

Pray, Señora, why do you fume? Did you want to steal my ornaments again yourself?

HINDA (*sobbing*)

No; I thought you would give them me back again.

JUAN

What, did you want the tunes to die again? Do you like finery better than dancing?

HINDA

Oh, that was a tale; I shall tell tales too, when I want to get anything I can't steal. And I know what I will do. I shall tell the boys I 've found some little foxes, and I will never say where they are till they give me back the feather!

(*She runs off again.*)

JUAN

Hem! the disciple seems to seize the mode sooner than the matter. Teaching virtue with this prickly pear may only teach the youngsters to use a new weapon; as your teaching orthodoxy with fagots may only bring up a fashion of roasting. Dios! my remarks grow too pregnant, — my wits get a plethora by solitary feeding on the produce of my own wisdom.

(*As he puts up his knife again,* HINDA *comes running back, and crying, "Our Queen! our Queen!"* JUAN *adjusts his garments and his lute, while* HINDA *turns to meet* FEDALMA, *who wears a Moorish dress, with gold ornaments, her black hair hanging round her in plaits, a white turban on her head, a dagger by her side. She carries a scarf on her left arm, which she holds up as a shade.*)

FEDALMA (*patting* HINDA'S *head*)

How now, wild one? You are hot and panting. Go to my tent, and help Nouna to plait reeds.

(HINDA *kisses* FEDALMA'S *hand, and runs off.* FEDALMA *advances towards* JUAN, *who kneels to take up the edge of her cymar, and kisses it.*)

JUAN

How is it with you, lady? You look sad.

FEDALMA

Oh, I am sick at heart. The eye of day,
The insistent summer sun, seems pitiless,
Shining in all the barren crevices
Of weary life, leaving no shade, no dark,
Where I may dream that hidden waters lie;
As pitiless as to some shipwrecked man,
Who, gazing from his narrow shoal of sand
On the wide unspecked round of blue and blue,
Sees that full light is errorless despair.
The insects' hum that slurs the silent dark
Startles, and seems to cheat me, as the tread
Of coming footsteps cheats the midnight watcher
Who holds her heart and waits to hear them pause,
And hears them never pause, but pass and die.
Music sweeps by me as a messenger
Carrying a message that is not for me.
The very sameness of the hills and sky
Is obduracy, and the lingering hours
Wait round me dumbly, like superfluous slaves,
Of whom I want naught but the secret news
They are forbid to tell. And, Juan, you —
You, too, are cruel — would be over-wise
In judging your friend's needs, and choose to hide
Something I crave to know.

JUAN

I, lady?

FEDALMA

You.

JUAN

I never had the virtue to hide aught,
Save what a man is whipped for publishing.
I 'm no more reticent than the voluble air, —
Dote on disclosure, — never could contain
The latter half of all my sentences,
But for the need to utter the beginning.
My lust to tell is so importunate
That it abridges every other vice,
And makes me temperate for want of time.
I dull sensation in the haste to say
'T is this or that, and choke report with surmise.
Judge, then, dear lady, if I could be mute
When but a glance of yours had bid me speak.

FEDALMA

Nay, sing such falsities! — you mock me worse
By speech that gravely seems to ask belief.
You are but babbling in a part you play
To please my father. Oh, 't is well meant, say you, —
Pity for woman's weakness. Take my thanks.

JUAN

Thanks angrily bestowed are red-hot coin
Burning your servant's palm.

FEDALMA

Deny it not,
You know how many leagues this camp of ours
Lies from Bedmár, — what mountains lie between, —
Could tell me if you would about the Duke, —
That he is comforted, sees how he gains

By losing the Zincala, finds how slight
The thread Fedalma made in that rich web,
A Spanish noble's life. No, that is false!
He never would think lightly of our love.
Some evil has befallen him, — he 's slain, —
Has sought for danger and has beckoned death
Because I made all life seem treachery.
Tell me the worst, — be merciful, — no worst,
Against the hideous painting of my fear,
Would not show like a better.

JUAN

If I speak,
Will you believe your slave? For truth is scant;
And where the appetite is still to hear
And not believe, falsehood would stint it less.
How say you? Does your hunger's fancy choose
The meagre fact?

FEDALMA (*seating herself on the ground*)

Yes, yes, the truth, dear Juan.
Sit now, and tell me all.

JUAN

That all is naught.
I can unleash my fancy if you wish
And hunt for phantoms: shoot an airy guess
And bring down airy likelihood, — some lie
Masked cunningly to look like royal truth
And cheat the shooter, while King Fact goes free,
Or else some image of reality
That doubt will handle and reject as false.
Ask for conjecture, — I can thread the sky
Like any swallow, but, if you insist,
On knowledge that would guide a pair of feet

Right to Bedmár, across the Moorish bounds,
A mule that dreams of stumbling over stones
Is better stored.

FEDALMA

And you have gathered naught
About the border wars? No news, no hint
Of any rumours that concern the Duke, —
Rumours kept from me by my father?

JUAN

None.
Your father trusts no secrets to the echoes.
Of late his movements have been hid from all
Save those few hundred picked Zincali breasts
He carries with him. Think you he 's a man
To let his projects slip from out his belt,
Then whisper him who haps to find them strayed
To be so kind as keep his counsel well?
Why, if he found me knowing aught too much,
He would straight gag or strangle me, and say,
" Poor hound! it was a pity that his bark
Could chance to mar my plans: he loved my daughter, —
The idle hound had naught to do but love,
So followed to the battle and got crushed."

FEDALMA (*holding out her hand, which* JUAN *kisses*)

Good Juan, I could have no nobler friend.
You 'd ope your veins and let your life-blood out
To save another's pain, yet hide the deed
With jesting, — say, 't was merest accident,
A sportive scratch that went by chance too deep, —
And die content with men's slight thought of you,
Finding your glory in another's joy.

JUAN

Dub not my likings virtues, lest they get
A drug-like taste, and breed a nausea.
Honey 's not sweet, commended as cathartic.
Such names are parchment labels upon gems
Hiding their colour. What is lovely seen
Priced in a tariff? — lapis lazuli,
Such bulk, so many drachmas: amethysts
Quoted at so much; sapphires higher still.
The stone like solid heaven in its blueness
Is what I care for, not its name or price.
So, if I live or die to serve my friend
'T is for my love — 't is for my friend alone,
And not for any rate that friendship bears
In heaven or on earth. Nay, I romance, —
I talk of Roland and the ancient peers.
In me 't is hardly friendship, only lack
Of a substantial self that holds a weight;
So I kiss larger things and roll with them.

FEDALMA

Nay, you will never hide your soul from me;
I 've seen the jewel's flash, and know 't is there,
Muffle it as you will. That foam-like talk
Will not wash out a fear which blots the good
Your presence brings me. Oft I 'm pierced afresh
Through all the pressure of my selfish griefs
By thought of you. It was a rash resolve
Made you disclose yourself when you kept watch
About the terrace wall: — your pity leaped
Seeing my ills alone and not your loss,
Self-doomed to exile. Juan, you must repent.
'T is not in nature that resolve, which feeds
On strenuous actions, should not pine and die
In these long days of empty listlessness.

JUAN

Repent? Not I. Repentance is the weight
Of indigested meals eat yesterday.
'T is for large animals that gorge on prey,
Not for a honey-sipping butterfly.
I am a thing of rhythm and redondillas, —
The momentary rainbow on the spray
Made by the thundering torrent of men's lives:
No matter whether I am here or there;
I still catch sunbeams. And in Africa,
Where melons and all fruits, they say, grow large,
Fables are real, and the apes polite,
A poet, too, may prosper past belief:
I shall grow epic, like the Florentine,
And sing the founding of our infant state,
Sing the Zincalo's Carthage.

FEDALMA

Africa!
Would we were there! Under another heaven,
In lands where neither love nor memory
Can plant a selfish hope, — in lands so far
I should not seem to see the outstretched arms
That seek me, or to hear the voice that calls.
I should feel distance only and despair;
So rest forever from the thought of bliss,
And wear my weight of life's great chain unstruggling.
Juan, if I could know he would forget, —
Nay, not forget, forgive me, — be content
That I forsook him for no joy, but sorrow;
For sorrow chosen rather than a joy
That destiny made base! Then he would taste
No bitterness in sweet, sad memory,
And I should live unblemished in his thought,

Hallowed like her who dies an unwed bride.
Our words have wings, but fly not where we would.
Could mine but reach him, Juan!

JUAN

Speak but the wish, —
My feet have wings, — I 'll be your Mercury.
I fear no shadowed perils by the way.
No man will wear the sharpness of his sword
On me. Nay, I 'm a herald of the Muse,
Sacred for Moors and Spaniards. I will go, —
Will fetch you tidings for an amulet.
But stretch not hope too strongly towards that mark
As issue of my wandering. Given, I cross
Safely the Moorish border, reach Bedmár:
Fresh counsels may prevail there, and the Duke
Being absent in the field, I may be trapped.
Men who are sour at missing larger game
May wing a chattering sparrow for revenge.
It is a chance no further worth the note
Than as a warning, lest you feared worse ill
If my return were stayed. I might be caged;
They would not harm me else. Untimely death,
The red auxiliary of the skeleton,
Has too much work on hand to think of me;
Or, if he cares to slay me, I shall fall
Choked with a grape-stone for economy.
The likelier chance is that I go and come,
Bringing you comfort back.

FEDALMA (*starts from her seat and walks to a little distance, standing a few moments with her back towards* JUAN, *then she turns round quickly, and goes towards him*)

No, Juan, no!
Those yearning words come from a soul infirm,

Crying and struggling at the pain of bonds
Which yet it would not loosen. He knows all, —
All that he needs to know: I said farewell:
I stepped across the cracking earth and knew
'T would yawn behind me. I must walk right on.
No, Juan, I will win naught by risking you:
The possible loss would poison hope. Besides,
'T were treachery in me: my father wills
That we — all here — should rest within this camp.
If I can never live, like him, on faith
In glorious morrows, I am resolute.
While he treads painfully with stillest step
And beady brow, pressed 'neath the weight of arms,
Shall I, to ease my fevered restlessness,
Raise peevish moans, shattering that fragile silence?
No! On the close-thronged spaces of the earth
A battle rages: Fate has carried me
'Mid the thick arrows: I will keep my stand, —
Not shrink and let the shaft pass by my breast
To pierce another. Oh, 't is written large
The thing I have to do. But you, dear Juan,
Renounce, endure, are brave, unurged by aught
Save the sweet overflow of your good will.

(*She seats herself again.*)

JUAN

Nay, I endure naught worse than napping sheep,
When nimble birds uproot a fleecy lock
To line their nest with. See! your bondsman, Queen,
The minstrel of your court, is featherless;
Deforms your presence by a moulting garb;
Shows like a roadside bush culled of its buds.
Yet, if your graciousness will not disdain
A poor plucked songster, — shall he sing to you?

Some lay of afternoons, — some ballad strain
Of those who ached once but are sleeping now
Under the sun-warmed flowers? 'T will cheat the time.

FEDALMA

Thanks, Juan, later, when this hour is passed.
My soul is clogged with self; it could not float
On with the pleasing sadness of your song.
Leave me in this green spot, but come again, —
Come with the lengthening shadows.

JUAN

Then your slave
Will go to chase the robbers. Queen, farewell!

FEDALMA

Best friend, my well-spring in the wilderness!

[While Juan sped along the stream, there came
From the dark tents a ringing joyous shout
That thrilled Fedalma with a summons grave
Yet welcome too. Straightway she rose and stood,
All languor banished, with a soul suspense
Like one who waits high presence, listening.
Was it a message, or her father's self
That made the camp so glad?
It was himself!
She saw him now advancing, girt with arms
That seemed like idle trophies hung for show
Beside the weight and fire of living strength
That made his frame. He glanced with absent triumph,
As one who conquers in some field afar

And bears off unseen spoil. But nearing her,
His terrible eyes intense sent forth new rays, —
A sudden sunshine where the lightning was
'Twixt meeting dark. All tenderly he laid
His hand upon her shoulder; tenderly,
His kiss upon her brow.]

ZARCA

My royal daughter!

FEDALMA

Father, I joy to see your safe return.

ZARCA

Nay, I but stole the time, as hungry men
Steal from the morrow's meal, made a forced
march,
Left Hassan as my watch-dog, all to see
My daughter, and to feed her famished hope
With news of promise.

FEDALMA

Is the task achieved
That was to be the herald of our flight?

ZARCA

Not outwardly, but to my inward vision
Things are achieved when they are well begun.
The perfect archer calls the deer his own
While yet the shaft is whistling. His keen eye
Never sees failure, sees the mark alone.
You have heard naught, then,—had no messenger?

FEDALMA

I, father? no: each quiet day has fled
Like the same moth, returning with slow wing,
And pausing in the sunshine.

ZARCA

It is well.
You shall not long count days in weariness.
Ere the full moon has waned again to new,
We shall reach Almería: Berber ships
Will take us for their freight, and we shall go
With plenteous spoil, not stolen, bravely won
By service done on Spaniards. Do you shrink?
Are you aught less than a Zincala?

FEDALMA

No;
But I am more. The Spaniards fostered me.

ZARCA

They stole you first, and reared you for the flames.
I found you, rescued you, that you might live
A true Zincala's life; else you were doomed.
Your bridal bed had been the rack.

FEDALMA (*in a low tone*)

They meant —
To seize me? — ere he came?

ZARCA

Yes, I know all.
They found your chamber empty.

FEDALMA (*eagerly*)

Then you know, —
(*Checking herself.*)
Father, my soul would be less laggard, fed
With fuller trust.

ZARCA

My daughter, I must keep
The Arab's secret. Arabs are our friends,
Grappling for life with Christians who lay waste
Granada's valleys, and with devilish hoofs
Trample the young green corn, with devilish play
Fell blossomed trees, and tear up well-pruned vines:
Cruel as tigers to the vanquished brave,
They wring out gold by oaths they mean to break;
Take pay for pity and are pitiless;
Then tinkle bells above the desolate earth,
And praise their monstrous gods, supposed to love
The flattery of liars. I will strike
The full-gorged dragon. You, my child, must watch
The battle with a heart, not fluttering
But duteous, firm-weighted by resolve,
Choosing between two lives, like her who holds
A dagger which must pierce one of two breasts,
And one of them her father's. Nay, you divine, —
I speak not closely, but in parables;
Put one for many.

FEDALMA (*collecting herself, and looking firmly at* ZARCA)

Then it is your will
That I ask nothing?

ZARCA

You shall know enough
To trace the sequence of the seed and flower.
El Zagal trusts me, rates my counsel high:
He, knowing I have won a grant of lands
Within the Berber's realm, wills me to be
The tongue of his good cause in Africa,
So gives us furtherance in our pilgrimage
For service hoped, as well as service done
In that great feat of which I am the eye,
And my three hundred Gypsies the best arm.
More, I am charged by other noble Moors
With messages of weight to Telemsán.
Ha, your eye flashes. Are you glad?

FEDALMA

Yes, glad
That men are forced to honour a Zincalo.

ZARCA

Oh, fighting for dear life men choose their swords
For cutting only, not for ornament.
What naught but Nature gives, man takes perforce
Where she bestows it, though in vilest place.
Can he compress invention out of pride,
Make heirship do the work of muscle, sail
Towards great discoveries with a pedigree?
Sick men ask cures, and Nature serves not hers
Daintily as a feast. A blacksmith once
Founded a dynasty and raised on high
The leathern apron over armies spread
Between the mountains like a lake of steel.

FEDALMA (*bitterly*)

To be contemned, then, is fair augury.
That pledge of future good at least is ours.

ZARCA

Let men contemn us: 't is such blind contempt
That leaves the wingéd broods to thrive in warmth
Unheeded, till they fill the air like storms.
So we shall thrive, — still darkly shall draw force
Into a new and multitudinous life
That likeness fashions to community,
Mother divine of customs, faith, and laws.
'T is ripeness, 't is fame's zenith that kills hope.
Huge oaks are dying, forests yet to come
Lie in the twigs and rotten-seeming seeds.

FEDALMA

And our Zincali? Under their poor husk
Do you discern such seed? You said our band
Was the best arm of some hard enterprise;
They give out sparks of virtue, then, and show
There 's metal in their earth?

ZARCA

Ay, metal fine
In my brave Gypsies. Not the lithest Moor
Has lither limbs for scaling, keener eye
To mark the meaning of the farthest speck
That tells of change; and they are disciplined
By faith in me, to such obedience
As needs no spy. My scalers and my scouts
Are to the Moorish force they 're leagued withal
As bow-string to the bow; while I their chief
Command the enterprise and guide the will

Of Moorish captains, as the pilot guides
With eye-instructed hand the passive helm.
For high device is still the highest force,
And he who holds the secret of the wheel
May make the rivers do what work he would.
With thoughts impalpable we clutch men's souls,
Weaken the joints of armies, make them fly
Like dust and leaves before the viewless wind.
Tell me what 's mirrored in the tiger's heart,
I 'll rule that too.

FEDALMA (*wrought to a glow of admiration*)

O my imperial father!
'T is where there breathes a mighty soul like yours
That men's contempt is of good augury.

ZARCA (*seizing both* FEDALMA'S *hands, and looking at her searchingly*)

And you, my daughter, are you not the child
Of the Zincalo? Does not his great hope
Thrill in your veins like shouts of victory?
'T is a vile life that like a garden pool
Lies stagnant in the round of personal loves;
That has no ear save for the tickling lute
Set to small measures, — deaf to all the beats
Of that large music rolling o'er the world:
A miserable, petty, low-roofed life,
That knows the mighty orbits of the skies
Through naught save light or dark in its own cabin.
The very brutes will feel the force of kind
And move together, gathering a new soul, —
The soul of multitudes. Say now, my child,
You will not falter, not look back and long
For unfledged ease in some soft alien nest.
The crane with outspread wing that heads the fli

Pauses not, feels no backward impulses:
Behind it summer was, and is no more;
Before it lies the summer it will reach
Or fall in the mid-ocean. And you no less
Must feel the force sublime of growing life.
New thoughts are urgent as the growth of wings;
The widening vision is imperious
As higher members bursting the worm's sheath.
You cannot grovel in the worm's delights:
You must take wingéd pleasures, wingéd pains.
Are you not steadfast? Will you live or die
For aught below your royal heritage?
To him who holds the flickering brief torch
That lights a beacon for the perishing,
Aught else is crime. Are you a false Zincala?

FEDALMA

Father, my soul is weak, the mist of tears
Still rises to my eyes, and hides the goal
Which to your undimmed sight is clear and change-
less.
But if I cannot plant resolve on hope
It will stand firm on certainty of woe.
I choose the ill that is most like to end
With my poor being. Hopes have precarious life.
They are oft blighted, withered, snapped sheer off
In vigorous growth and turned to rottenness.
But faithfulness can feed on suffering,
And knows no disappointment. Trust in me!
If it were needed, this poor trembling hand
Should grasp the torch, — strive not to let it fall
Though it were burning down close to my flesh,
No beacon lighted yet: through the damp dark
I should still hear the cry of gasping swimmers.
Father, I will be true!

ZARCA

I trust that word.
And, for your sadness, — you are young, — the bruise
Will leave no mark. The worst of misery
Is when a nature framed for noblest things
Condemns itself in youth to petty joys,
And, sore athirst for air, breathes scanty life
Gasping from out the shallows. You are saved
From such poor doubleness. The life we choose
Breathes high, and sees a full-arched firmament.
Our deeds shall speak like rock-hewn messages,
Teaching great purpose to the distant time.
Now I must hasten back. I shall but speak
To Nadar of the order he must keep
In setting watch and victualling. The stars
And the young moon must see me at my post.
Nay, rest you here. Farewell, my younger self, —
Strong-hearted daughter! Shall I live in you
When the earth covers me?

FEDALMA

My father, death
Should give your will divineness, make it strong
With the beseechings of a mighty soul
That left its work unfinished. Kiss me now:

(*They embrace, and she adds tremulously as they part,*)

And when you see fair hair be pitiful.

[*Exit* ZARCA.

(FEDALMA *seats herself on the bank, leans her head forward, and covers her face with her drapery. While she is seated thus,*

HINDA *comes from the bank, with a branch of musk roses in her hand. Seeing* FEDALMA *with head bent and covered, she pauses, and begins to move on tiptoe.*)

HINDA

Our Queen! Can she be crying? There she sits
As I did every day when my dog Saad
Sickened and yelled, and seemed to yell so loud
After we 'd buried him, I oped his grave.

(*She comes forward on tiptoe, kneels at* FEDALMA'S *feet, and embraces them.* FEDALMA *uncovers her head.*)

FEDALMA

Hinda! what is it?

HINDA

Queen, a branch of roses, —
So sweet, you 'll love to smell them. 'T was the last.
I climbed the bank to get it before Tralla,
And slipped and scratched my arm. But I don't mind.
You love the roses, — so do I. I wish
The sky would rain down roses, as they rain
From off the shaken bush. Why will it not?
Then all the valley would be pink and white
And soft to tread on. They would fall as light
As feathers, smelling sweet; and it would be
Like sleeping and yet walking, all at once!
Over the sea, Queen, where we soon shall go,
Will it rain roses?

FEDALMA

No, my prattler, no!
It never will rain roses: when we want
To have more roses we must plant more trees.
But you want nothing, little one, — the world
Just suits you as it suits the tawny squirrels.
Come, you want nothing.

HINDA

Yes, I want more berries, —
Red ones, — to wind about my neck and arms
When I am married, — on my ankles too
I want to wind red berries, and on my head.

FEDALMA

Who is it you are fond of? Tell me, now.

HINDA

O Queen, you know! It could be no one else
But Ismaël. He catches birds, — no end!
Knows where the speckled fish are, scales the rocks
And sings and dances with me when I like.
How should I marry and not marry him?

FEDALMA

Should you have loved him, had he been a Moor,
Or white Castilian?

HINDA (*starting to her feet, then kneeling again*)

Are you angry, Queen?
Say why you will think shame of your poor Hinda?
She 'd sooner be a rat and hang on thorns
To parch until the wind had scattered her,
Than be an outcast, spit at by her tribe.

FEDALMA

Hinda, I know you are a good Zincala.
But would you part from Ismaël? leave him now
If your chief bade you, — said it was for good
To all your tribe that you must part from him?

HINDA (*giving a sharp cry*)

Ah, will he say so?

FEDALMA (*almost fierce in her earnestness*)

Nay, child, answer me.
Could you leave Ismaël? get into a boat
And see the waters widen 'twixt you two
Till all was water and you saw him not,
And knew that you would never see him more?
If 't was your chief's command, and if he said
Your tribe would all be slaughtered, die of plague,
Of famine, — madly drink each other's blood . . . .

HINDA (*trembling*)

O Queen, if it is so, tell Ismaël.

FEDALMA

You would obey, then? part from him forever?

HINDA

How could we live else? With our brethren lost? —
No marriage feast? The day would turn to dark.
Zincali cannot live without their tribe.
I must obey! Poor Ismaël — poor Hinda!
But will it ever be so cold and dark?
Oh, I would sit upon the rocks and cry,
And cry so long that I could cry no more:
Then I should go to sleep.

FEDALMA

No, Hinda, no!
Thou never shalt be called to part from him.
I will have berries for thee, red and black,
And I will be so glad to see thee glad,
That earth will seem to hold enough of joy
To outweigh all the pangs of those who part.
Be comforted, bright eyes. See, I will tie
These roses in a crown, for thee to wear.

HINDA (*clapping her hands, while* FEDALMA *puts the roses on her head*)

Oh, I 'm as glad as many little foxes, —
I will find Ismaël, and tell him all. (*She runs off.*)

FEDALMA (*alone*)

She has the strength I lack. Within her world
The dial has not stirred since first she woke:
No changing light has made the shadows die,
And taught her trusting soul sad difference.
For her, good, right, and law are all summed up
In what is possible; life is one web
Where love, joy, kindred, and obedience
Lie fast and even, in one warp and woof
With thirst and drinking, hunger, food, and sleep.
She knows no struggles, sees no double path:
Her fate is freedom, for her will is one
With the Zincalo's law, the only law
She ever knew. For me — oh, I have fire within,
But on my will there falls the chilling snow
Of thoughts that come as subtly as soft flakes,
Yet press at last with hard and icy weight.
I could be firm, could give myself the wrench
And walk erect, hiding my life-long wound,

If I but saw the fruit of all my pain
With that strong vision which commands the soul,
And makes great awe the monarch of desire.
But now I totter, seeing no far goal:
I tread the rocky pass, and pause and grasp,
Guided by flashes. When my father comes,
And breathes into my soul his generous hope, —
By his own greatness making life seem great,
As the clear heavens bring sublimity,
And show earth larger, spanned by that blue vast, —
Resolve is strong: I can embrace my sorrow,
Nor nicely weigh the fruit; possessed with need
Solely to do the noblest, though it failed, —
Though lava streamed upon my breathing deed
And buried it in night and barrenness.
But soon the glow dies out, the warrior's music
That vibrated as strength through all my limbs
Is heard no longer; over the wide scene
There 's naught but chill gray silence, or the hum
And fitful discord of a vulgar world.
Then I sink helpless, — sink into the arms
Of all sweet memories, and dream of bliss:
See looks that penetrate like tones; hear tones
That flash looks with them. Even now I feel
Soft airs enwrap me, as if yearning rays
Of some far presence touched me with their warmth
And brought a tender murmuring. . . .

[While she mused,
A figure came from out the olive-trees
That bent close-whispering 'twixt the parted hills
Beyond the crescent of thick cactus: paused
At sight of her; then slowly forward moved
With careful step, and gently said, "FEDALMA!"

Fearing lest fancy had enslaved her sense,
She quivered, rose, but turned not. Soon again:
"FEDALMA, it is SILVA!" Then she turned.
He, with bared head and arms entreating beamed
Like morning on her. Vision held her still
One moment, then with gliding motion swift,
Inevitable as the melting stream's,
She found her rest within his circling arms.]

FEDALMA

O love, you are living, and believe in me!

DON SILVA

Once more we are together. Wishing dies, —
Stifled with bliss.

FEDALMA

You did not hate me, then, —
Think me an ingrate, — think my love was small
That I forsook you?

DON SILVA

Dear, I trusted you
As holy men trust God. You could do naught
That was not pure and loving, — though the deed
Might pierce me unto death. You had less trust,
Since you suspected mine. 'T was wicked doubt.

FEDALMA

Nay, when I saw you hating me the fault
Seemed in my lot, — the poor Zincala's, — her
On whom you lavished all your wealth of love
As price of naught but sorrow. Then I said,
"'T is better so. He will be happier!"
But soon that thought, struggling to be a hope,
Would end in tears.

DON SILVA

It was a cruel thought.
Happier! True misery is not begun
Until I cease to love thee.

FEDALMA

Silva!

DON SILVA

Mine!

(*They stand a moment or two in silence.*)

FEDALMA

I thought I had so much to tell you, love, —
Long eloquent stories, — how it all befell, —
The solemn message, calling me away
To awful spousals, where my own dead joy,
A conscious ghost, looked on and saw me wed.

DON SILVA

Oh that grave speech would cumber our quick souls
Like bells that waste the moments with their loudness.

FEDALMA

And if it all were said, 't would end in this,
That I still loved you when I fled away.
'T is no more wisdom than the little birds
Make known by their soft twitter when they feel
Each other's heart beat.

DON SILVA

All the deepest things
We now say with our eyes and meeting pulse:
Our voices need but prattle.

FEDALMA

I forget
All the drear days of thirst in this one draught.
(*Again they are silent for a few moments.*)
But tell me how you came? Where are your guards?
Is there no risk? And now I look at you,
This garb is strange . . .

DON SILVA

I came alone.

FEDALMA

Alone?

DON SILVA

Yes, — fled in secret. There was no way else
To find you safely.

FEDALMA (*letting one hand fall and moving a little from him with a look of sudden terror, while he clasps her more firmly by the other arm*)

Silva!

DON SILVA

It is naught.
Enough that I am here. Now we will cling.
What power shall hinder us? You left me once
To set your father free. That task is done,
And you are mine again. I have braved all
That I might find you, see your father, win
His furtherance in bearing you away
To some safe refuge. Are we not betrothed?

FEDALMA

Oh, I am trembling 'neath the rush of thoughts
That come like griefs at morning, — look at me
With awful faces, from the vanishing haze
That momently had hidden them.

DON SILVA

What thoughts?

FEDALMA

Forgotten burials. There lies a grave
Between this visionary present and the past.
Our joy is dead, and only smiles on us
A loving shade from out the place of tombs.

DON SILVA

Fedalma, your love faints, else aught that parts us
Would seem but superstition. Love supreme
Defies all sophistry, — risks avenging fires.
I have risked all things. But your love is faint.

FEDALMA (*retreating a little, but keeping his hand*)

Silva, if now between us came a sword,
Severed my arm, and left our two hands clasped,
This poor maimed arm would feel the clasp till death.
What parts us is a sword . . .

(ZARCA *has been advancing in the background. He has drawn his sword, and now thrusts the naked blade between them.* SILVA *lets go* FEDALMA'S *hand, and grasps his sword.* FEDALMA, *startled at first, stands firmly, as if prepared to interpose between her father and the Duke.*)

ZARCA

Ay, 't is a sword
That parts the Spanish noble and the true Zincala:
A sword that was baptized in Christian blood,
When once a band, cloaking with Spanish law
Their brutal rapine, would have butchered us,
And then outraged our women.
(*Resting the point of his sword on the ground*)
My lord Duke,
I was a guest within your fortress once
Against my will; had entertainment too, —
Much like a galley slave's. Pray, have you sought
The poor Zincalo's camp, to find return
For that Castilian courtesy? or rather
To make amends for all our prisoned toil
By this great honour of your unasked presence?

DON SILVA

Chief, I have brought no scorn to meet your scorn.
I came because love urged me, — that deep love
I bear to her whom you call daughter, — her
Whom I reclaim as my betrothéd bride.

ZARCA

Doubtless you bring for final argument
Your men-at-arms who will escort your bride?

DON SILVA

I came alone. The only force I bring
Is tenderness. Nay, I will trust besides
In all the pleadings of a father's care
To wed his daughter as her nurture bids.

And for your tribe, — whatever purposed good
Your thoughts may cherish, I will make secure
With the strong surety of a noble's power:
My wealth shall be your treasury.

ZARCA (*with irony*)

My thanks!
To me you offer liberal price; for her
Your love's beseeching will be force supreme.
She will go with you as a willing slave,
Will give a word of parting to her father,
Wave farewells to her tribe, then turn and say:
"Now, my lord, I am nothing but your bride;
I am quite culled, have neither root nor trunk,
Now wear me with your plume!"

DON SILVA

Yours is the wrong
Feigning in me one thought of her below
The highest homage. I would make my rank
The pedestal of her worth; a noble's sword,
A noble's honour, her defence; his love
The life-long sanctuary of her womanhood.

ZARCA

I tell you, were you King of Aragon,
And won my daughter's hand, your higher rank
Would blacken her dishonour. 'T were excuse
If you were beggared, homeless, spit upon,
And so made even with her people's lot;
For then she would be lured by want, not wealth,
To be a wife amongst an alien race
To whom her tribe owes curses.

DON SILVA

Such blind hate
Is fit for beasts of prey, but not for men.
My hostile acts against you should but count
As ignorant strokes against a friend unknown;
And for the wrongs inflicted on your tribe
By Spanish edicts or the cruelty
Of Spanish vassals, am I criminal?
Love comes to cancel all ancestral hate,
Subdues all heritage, proves that in mankind
Union is deeper than division.

ZARCA

Ay,
Such love is common: I have seen it oft, —
Seen many women rend the sacred ties
That bind them in high fellowship with men,
Making them mothers of a people's virtue;
Seen them so levelled to a handsome steed
That yesterday was Moorish property,
To-day is Christian, — wears new-fashioned gear,
Neighs to new feeders, and will prance alike
Under all banners, so the banner be
A master's who caresses. Such light change
You call conversion; we Zincali call
Conversion infamy. Our people's faith
Is faithfulness; not the rote-learned belief
That we are heaven's highest favourites,
But the resolve that, being most forsaken
Among the sons of men, we will be true
Each to the other, and our common lot.
You Christians burn men for their heresy:
Our vilest heretic is that Zincala
Who, choosing ease, forsakes her people's woes.
The dowry of my daughter is to be

Chief woman of her tribe, and rescue it.
A bride with such a dowry has no match
Among the subjects of that Catholic Queen
Who would have Gypsies swept into the sea
Or else would have them gibbeted.

DON SILVA

And you,
Fedalma's father, — you who claim the dues
Of fatherhood, — will offer up her youth
To mere grim idols of your fantasy!
Worse than all Pagans, with no oracle
To bid you murder, no sure good to win,
Will sacrifice your daughter, — to no god,
But to a hungry fire within your soul,
Mad hopes, blind hate, that like possessing fiends
Shriek at a name! This sweetest virgin, reared
As garden flowers, to give the sordid world
Glimpses of perfectness, you snatch and thrust
On dreary wilds; in visions mad, proclaim
Semiramis of Gypsy wanderers;
Doom, with a broken arrow in her heart,
To wait for death 'mid squalid savages:
For what? You would be saviour of your tribe;
So said Fedalma's letter; rather say,
You have the will to save by ruling men,
But first to rule; and with that flinty will
You cut your way, though the first cut you give
Gash your child's bosom.

(*While* SILVA *has been speaking, with growing passion,* FEDALMA *has placed herself between him and her father.*)

ZARCA (*with calm irony*)

You are loud, my lord!
You only are the reasonable man;

You have a heart, I none. Fedalma's good
Is what you see, you care for; while I seek
No good, not even my own, urged on by naught
But hellish hunger, which must still be fed
Though in the feeding it I suffer throes.
Fume at your own opinion as you will:
I speak not now to you, but to my daughter.
If she still calls it good to mate with you,
To be a Spanish duchess, kneel at court,
And hope her beauty is excuse to men
When women whisper, "She was a Zincala;"
If she still calls it good to take a lot
That measures joy for her as she forgets
Her kindred and her kindred's misery,
Nor feels the softness of her downy couch
Marred by remembrance that she once forsook
The place that she was born to, — let her go!
If life for her still lies in alien love,
That forces her to shut her soul from truth
As men in shameful pleasures shut out day;
And death, for her, is to do rarest deeds,
Which, even failing, leave new faith to men,
The faith in human hearts, — then, let her go!
She is my only offspring; in her veins
She bears the blood her tribe has trusted in;
Her heritage is their obedience,
And if I died, she might still lead them forth
To plant the race her lover now reviles
Where they may make a nation, and may rise
To grander manhood than his race can show;
Then live a goddess, sanctifying oaths,
Enforcing right, and ruling consciences,
By law deep-graven in exalting deeds,
Through the long ages of her people's life.
If she can leave that lot for silken shame,
For kisses honeyed by oblivion, —

The bliss of drunkards or the blank of fools, —
Then let her go! You Spanish Catholics,
When you are cruel, base, and treacherous,
For ends not pious, tender gifts to God,
And for men's wounds offer much oil to churches:
We have no altars for such healing gifts
As soothe the heavens for outrage done on earth.
We have no priesthood and no creed to teach
That the Zincala who might save her race
And yet abandons it, may cleanse that blot,
And mend the curse her life has been to men,
By saving her own soul. Her one base choice
Is wrong unchangeable, is poison shed
Where men must drink shed by her poisoning will.
Now choose, Fedalma!

[But her choice was made.
Slowly, while yet her father spoke, she moved
From where oblique with deprecating arms
She stood between the two who swayed her heart:
Slowly she moved to choose sublimer pain;
Yearning, yet shrinking; wrought upon by awe,
Her own brief life seeming a little isle
Remote through visions of a wider world
With fates close-crowded; firm to slay her joy
That cut her heart with smiles beneath the knife,
Like a sweet babe foredoomed by prophecy.
She stood apart, yet near her father: stood
Hand clutching hand, her limbs all tense with will
That strove against her anguish, eyes that seemed
a soul
Yearning in death towards him she loved and left.
He faced her, pale with passion and a will
Fierce to resist whatever might seem strong
And ask him to submit: he saw one end, —
He must be conqueror; monarch of his lot

And not its tributary. But she spoke
Tenderly, pleadingly.]

FEDALMA

My lord, farewell!
'T was well we met once more; now we must part.
I think we had the chief of all love's joys
Only in knowing that we loved each other.

DON SILVA

I thought we loved with love that clings till death,
Clings as brute mothers bleeding to their young,
Still sheltering, clutching it, though it were dead;
Taking the death-wound sooner than divide.
I thought we loved so.

FEDALMA

Silva, it is fate.
Great Fate has made me heiress of this woe.
You must forgive Fedalma all her debt:
She is quite beggared: if she gave herself,
'T would be a self corrupt with stifled thoughts
Of a forsaken better. It is truth
My father speaks: the Spanish noble's wife
Would be a false Zincala. I will bear
The heavy trust of my inheritance.
See, 't was my people's life that throbbed in me;
An unknown need stirred darkly in my soul,
And made me restless even in my bliss.
Oh, all my bliss was in our love; but now
I may not taste it: some deep energy
Compels me to choose hunger. Dear, farewell!
I must go with my people.

[She stretched forth

Her tender hands, that oft had lain in his,
The hands he knew so well, that sight of them
Seemed like their touch. But he stood still as death;
Locked motionless by forces opposite:
His frustrate hopes still battled with despair;
His will was prisoner to the double grasp
Of rage and hesitancy. All the travelled way
Behind him, he had trodden confident,
Ruling munificently in his thought
This Gypsy father. Now the father stood
Present and silent and unchangeable
As a celestial portent. Backward lay
The traversed road, the town's forsaken wall,
The risk, the daring; all around him now
Was obstacle, save where the rising flood
Of love close pressed by anguish of denial
Was sweeping him resistless; save where she
Gazing stretched forth her tender hands, that hurt
Like parting kisses. Then at last he spoke.]

DON SILVA

No, I can never take those hands in mine,
Then let them go forever!

FEDALMA

It must be.
We may not make this world a paradise
By walking it together hand in hand,
With eyes that meeting feed a double strength.
We must be only joined by pains divine
Of spirits blent in mutual memories.
Silva, our joy is dead.

DON SILVA

But love still lives,
And has a safer guard in wretchedness.
Fedalma, women know no perfect love:
Loving the strong, they can forsake the strong;
Man clings because the being whom he loves
Is weak and needs him. I can never turn
And leave you to your difficult wandering;
Know that you tread the desert, bear the storm,
Shed tears, see terrors, faint with weariness,
Yet live away from you. I should feel naught
But your imagined pains: in my own steps
See your feet bleeding, taste your silent tears,
And feel no presence but your loneliness.
No, I will never leave you!

ZARCA

My lord Duke,
I have been patient, given room for speech,
Bent not to move my daughter by command,
Save that of her own faithfulness. But now,
All further words are idle elegies
Unfitting times of action. You are here
With the safe conduct of that trust you showed
Coming alone to the Zincalo's camp.
I would fain meet all trust with courtesy
As well as honour; but my utmost power
Is to afford you Gypsy guard to-night
Within the tents that keep the northward lines,
And for the morrow, escort on your way
Back to the Moorish bounds.

DON SILVA

What if my words
Were meant for deeds, decisive as a lead

Into the current? It is not my wont
To utter hollow words, and speak resolves
Like verses banded in a madrigal.
I spoke in action first: I faced all risks
To find Fedalma. Action speaks again
When I, a Spanish noble, here declare
That I abide with her, adopt her lot,
Claiming alone fulfilment of her vows
As my betrothéd wife.

FEDALMA (*wresting herself from him, and standing opposite with a look of terror*)

Nay, Silva, nay!
You could not live so; spring from your high place . . .

DON SILVA

Yes, I have said it. And you, chief, are bound
By her strict vows, no stronger fealty
Being left to cancel them.

ZARCA

Strong words, my lord!
Sounds fatal as the hammer-strokes that shape
The glowing metal: they must shape your life.
That you will claim my daughter is to say
That you will leave your Spanish dignities,
Your home, your wealth, your people, to become
A true Zincalo; share your wanderings,
And be a match meet for my daughter's dower
By living for her tribe; take the deep oath
That binds you to us; rest within our camp,
Nevermore hold command of Spanish men,
And keep my orders. See, my lord, you lock
A many-winding chain, — a heavy chain.

DON SILVA

I have but one resolve: let the rest follow.
What is my rank? To-morrow it will be filled
By one who eyes it like a carrion bird,
Waiting for death. I shall be no more missed
Than waves are missed that leaping on the rock
Find there a bed and rest. Life 's a vast sea
That does its mighty errand without fail,
Panting in unchanged strength though waves are changing.
And I have said it. She shall be my people,
And where she gives her life I will give mine.
She shall not live alone, nor die alone.
I will elect my deeds, and be the liege,
Not of my birth, but of that good alone
I have discerned and chosen.

ZARCA

Our poor faith
Allows not rightful choice, save of the right
Our birth has made for us. And you, my lord,
Can still defer your choice, for some days' space.
I march perforce to-night; you, if you will,
Under Zincalo guard, can keep the heights
With silent Time that slowly opes the scroll
Of change inevitable; taking no oath
Till my accomplished task leaves me at large
To see you keep your purpose or renounce it.

DON SILVA

Chief, do I hear amiss, or does your speech
Ring with a doubleness which I had held
Most alien to you? You would put me off,
And cloak evasion with allowance? No!

We will complete our pledges. I will take
That oath which binds not me alone, but you,
To join my life forever with Fedalma's.

ZARCA

I wrangle not, — time presses. But the oath
Will leave you that same post upon the heights;
Pledged to remain there while my absence lasts.
You are agreed, my lord?

DON SILVA

Agreed to all.

ZARCA

Then I will give the summons to our camp.
We will adopt you as a brother now,
In the Zincalo's fashion. [*Exit* ZARCA.

(SILVA *takes* FEDALMA'S *hands.*)

FEDALMA

O my lord!
I think the earth is trembling: naught is firm.
Some terror chills me with a shadowy grasp.
Am I about to wake, or do you breathe
Here in this valley? Did the outer air
Vibrate to fatal words, or did they shake
Only my dreaming soul? You a Zincalo?

DON SILVA

Is then your love too faint to raise belief
Up to that height?

FEDALMA

Silva, had you but said
That you would die, — that were an easy task

For you who oft have fronted death in war.
But so to live for me, — you, used to rule, —
You could not breathe the air my father breathes:
His presence is subjection. Go, my lord!
Fly, while there yet is time. Wait not to speak.
I will declare that I refused your love, —
Would keep no vows to you . . .

DON SILVA

It is too late.
You shall not thrust me back to seek a good
Apart from you. And what good? Why, to face
Your absence, — all the want that drove me forth
To work the will of a more tyrannous friend
Than any uncowled father. Life at least
Gives choice of ills; forces me to defy,
But shall not force me to a weak defiance.
The power that threatened you, to master me,
That scorches like a cave-hid dragon's breath,
Sure of its victory in spite of hate,
Is what I last will bend to, — most defy.
Your father has a chieftain's ends, befitting
A soldier's eye and arm: were he as strong
As the Moors' prophet, yet the prophet too
Had younger captains of illustrious fame
Among the infidels. Let him command,
For when your father speaks, I shall hear you.
Life were no gain if you were lost to me:
I would straight go and seek the Moorish walls,
Challenge their bravest, and embrace swift death.
The Glorious Mother and her pitying Son
Are not Inquisitors, else their heaven were hell.
Perhaps they hate their cruel worshippers,
And let them feed on lies. I 'll rather trust
They love you and have sent me to defend you.

FEDALMA

I made my creed so, just to suit my mood
And smooth all hardship, till my father came
And taught my soul by ruling it. Since then
I cannot weave a dreaming happy creed
Where our love's happiness is not accursed.
My father shook my soul awake. And you, —
What the Zincala may not quit for you,
I cannot joy that you should quit for her.

DON SILVA

Oh, Spanish men are not a petty band
Where one deserter makes a fatal breach.
Men, even nobles, are more plenteous
Than steeds and armour; and my weapons left
Will find new hands to wield them. Arrogance
Makes itself champion of mankind, and holds
God's purpose maimed for one hidalgo lost.
See where your father comes and brings a crowd
Of witnesses to hear my oath of love;
The low red sun glows on them like a fire;
This seems a valley in some strange new world,
Where we have found each other, my Fedalma.

BOOK IV

NOW twice the day had sunk from off the hills
While Silva kept his watch there, with the band
Of strong Zincali. When the sun was high
He slept, then, waking, strained impatient eyes
To catch the promise of some moving form
That might be Juan, — Juan who went and came
To soothe two hearts, and claimed naught for his own:
Friend more divine than all divinities,
Quenching his human thirst in others' joy.
All through the lingering nights and pale chill dawns
Juan had hovered near; with delicate sense,
As of some breath from every changing mood,
Had spoken or kept silence; touched his lute
To hint of melody, or poured brief strains
That seemed to make all sorrows natural,
Hardly worth weeping for, since life was short,
And shared by loving souls. Such pity welled
Within the minstrel's heart of light-tongued Juan
For this doomed man, who with dream-shrouded eyes
Had stepped into a torrent as a brook,
Thinking to ford it and return at will,
And now waked helpless in the eddying flood,
Hemmed by its raging hurry. Once that thought,
How easy wandering is, how hard and strict
The homeward way, had slipped from reverie
Into low-murmured song; — (brief Spanish song
'Scaped him as sighs escape from other men).

Push off the boat,
Quit, quit the shore,
The stars will guide us back:—
O gathering cloud,
O wide, wide sea,
O waves that keep no track!

On through the pines!
The pillared woods,
Where silence breathes sweet breath:—
O labyrinth,
O sunless gloom,
The other side of death!

Such plaintive song had seemed to please the Duke,—
Had seemed to melt all voices of reproach
To sympathetic sadness; but his moods
Had grown more fitful with the growing hours,
And this soft murmur had the iterant voice
Of heartless Echo, whom no pain can move
To say aught else than we have said to her.
He spoke, impatient: "Juan, cease thy song.
Our whimpering poesy and small-paced tunes
Have no more utterance than the cricket's chirp
For souls that carry heaven and hell within."
Then Juan, lightly: "True, my lord, I chirp
For lack of soul; some hungry poets chirp
For lack of bread. 'T were wiser to sit down
And count the star-seed, till I fell asleep
With the cheap wine of pure stupidity."
And Silva, checked by courtesy: "Nay, Juan,
Were speech once good, thy song were best of speech.
I meant, all life is but poor mockery:
Action, place, power, the visible wide world

Are tattered masquerading of this self,
This pulse of conscious mystery: all change,
Whether to high or low, is change of rags.
But for her love, I would not take a good
Save to burn out in battle, in a flame
Of madness that would feel no mangled limbs,
And die not knowing death, but passing straight—
Well, well, to other flames — in purgatory."
Keen Juan's ear caught the self-discontent
That vibrated beneath the changing tones
Of life-contemning scorn. Gently he said:
"But *with* her love, my lord, the world deserves
A higher rate; were it but masquerade,
The rags were surely worth the wearing?" "Yes.
No misery shall force me to repent
That I have loved her."
So with wilful talk,
Fencing the wounded soul from beating winds
Of truth that came unasked, companionship
Made the hours lighter. And the Gypsy guard,
Trusting familiar Juan, were content,
At friendly hint from him to still their songs
And busy jargon round the nightly fires.
Such sounds the quick-conceiving poet knew
Would strike on Silva's agitated soul
Like mocking repetition of the oath
That bound him in strange clanship with the tribe
Of human panthers, flame-eyed, lithe-limbed, fierce,
Unrecking of time-woven subtleties
And high tribunals of a phantom-world.

But the third day, though Silva southward gazed
Till all the shadows slanted towards him, gazed
Till all the shadows died, no Juan came.
Now in his stead came loneliness, and thought
Inexorable, fastening with firm chain

What is to what hath been. Now awful Night,
Ancestral mystery of mysteries, came down
Past all the generations of the stars,
And visited his soul with touch more close
Than when he kept that younger, briefer watch
Under the church's roof beside his arms,
And won his knighthood.
Well, this solitude,
This company with the enduring universe,
Whose mighty silence carrying all the past
Absorbs our history as with a breath,
Should give him more assurance, make him strong
In all contempt of that poor circumstance
Called human life, — customs and bonds and laws
Wherewith men make a better or a worse,
Like children playing on a barren mound
Feigning a thing to strive for or avoid.
Thus Silva urged, answering his many-voiced self,
Whose hungry needs, like petulant multitudes,
Lured from the home that nurtured them to strength,
Made loud insurgence. Thus he called on Thought,
On dexterous Thought, with its swift alchemy
To change all forms, dissolve all prejudice
Of man's long heritage, and yield him up
A crude fused world to fashion as he would.
Thought played him double; seemed to wear the yoke
Of sovereign passion in the noonday height
Of passion's prevalence; but served anon
As tribune to the larger soul which brought
Loud-mingled cries from every human need
That ages had instructed into life.
He could not grasp Night's black blank mystery
And wear it for a spiritual garb
Creed-proof: he shuddered at its passionless touch.

On solitary souls, the universe
Looks down inhospitable; the human heart
Finds nowhere shelter but in human kind.
He yearned towards images that had breath in them,
That sprang warm palpitant with memories
From streets and altars, from ancestral homes,
Banners and trophies and the cherishing rays
Of shame and honour in the eyes of man.
These made the speech articulate of his soul,
That could not move to utterance of scorn
Save in words bred by fellowship; could not feel
Resolve of hardest constancy to love,
The firmer for the sorrows of the loved,
Save by concurrent energies high-wrought
To sensibilities transcending sense
Through closest citizenship, and long-shared pains
Of far-off labouring ancestors. In vain
He sought the outlaw's strength, and made a right
Contemning that hereditary right
Which held dim habitations in his frame,
Mysterious haunts of echoes old and far,
The voice divine of human loyalty.
At home, among his people, he had played
In sceptic ease with saints and images
And thunders of the Church that deadened fell
Through screens of priests plethoric. Awe, unscathed
By deeper trespass, slept without a dream.
But for such trespass as made outcasts, still
The ancient Furies lived with faces new
And lurked with lighter slumber than of old
O'er Catholic Spain, the land of sacred oaths
That might be broken.
Now the former life
Of close-linked fellowship, the life that made

His full-formed self, as the impregnant sap
Of years successive frames the full-branched tree, —
Was present in one whole; and that great trust
His deed had broken turned reproach on him
From faces of all witnesses who heard
His uttered pledges; saw him hold high place
Centring reliance; use rich privilege
That bound him like a victim-nourished god
By tacit covenant to shield and bless;
Assume the Cross and take his knightly oath
Mature, deliberate: faces human all,
And some divine as well as human: His
Who hung supreme, the suffering Man divine
Above the altar; Hers the Mother pure
Whose glance informed his masculine tenderness
With deepest reverence; the Archangel armed,
Trampling man's enemy: all heroic forms
That fill the world of faith with voices, hearts,
And high companionship, to Silva now
Made but one inward and insistent world
With faces of his peers, with court and hall
And deference, and reverent vassalage
And filial pieties, — one current strong,
The warmly mingled life-blood of his mind,
Sustaining him even when he idly played
With rules, beliefs, charges, and ceremonies
As arbitrary fooling. Such revenge
Is wrought by the long travail of mankind
On him who scorns it, and would shape his life
Without obedience.
But his warrior's pride
Would take no wounds save on the breast. He faced
The fatal crowd: "I never shall repent!
If I have sinned my sin was made for me

By men's perverseness. There 's no blameless life
Save for the passionless, no sanctities
But have the selfsame roof and props with crime,
Or have their roots close interlaced with vileness.
If I have loved her less, been more a craven,
I had kept my place and won the easy praise
Of a true Spanish noble. But I loved,
And, loving, dared, — not Death the warrior
But Infamy that binds and strips and holds
The brand and lash. I have dared all for her.
She was my good, — what other men call heaven
And for the sake of it bear penances;
Nay, some of old were baited, tortured, flayed
To win their heaven. Heaven was their good,
She, mine. And I have braved for her all fires
Certain or threatened; for I go away
Beyond the reach of expiation, — far away
From sacramental blessing. Does God bless
No outlaw? Shut his absolution fast
In human breath? Is there no God for me
Save Him whose cross I have forsaken? — Well,
I am forever exiled, — but with her.
She is dragged out into the wilderness;
I, with my love, will be her providence.
I have a right to choose my good or ill,
A right to damn myself! The ill is mine.
I never will repent!" . . .
Thus Silva, inwardly debating, all his ear
Turned into audience of a twofold mind;
For even in tumult full-fraught consciousness
Had plenteous being for a Self aloof
That gazed and listened, like a soul in dreams
Weaving the wondrous tale it marvels at.
But oft the conflict slackened, oft strong Love
With tidal energy returning laid
All other restlessness: Fedalma came

And with her visionary presence brought
What seemed a waking in the warm spring morn.
He still was pacing on the stony earth
Under the deepening night; the fresh-lit fires
Were flickering on dark forms and eyes that met
His forward and his backward tread; but she,
She was within him, making his whole self
Mere correspondence with her image: sense,
In all its deep recesses where it keeps
The mystic stores of ecstasy, was transformed
To memory that killed the hour, like wine.
Then Silva said: "She, by herself, is life.
What was my joy before I loved her, — what
Shall Heaven lure us with, love being lost?" —
For he was young.
But now around the fires
The Gypsy band felt freer; Juan's song
Was no more there, nor Juan's friendly ways
For links of amity 'twixt their wild mood
And this strange brother, this pale Spanish duke,
Who with their Gypsy badge upon his breast
Took readier place within their alien hearts
As a marked captive, who would fain escape.
And Nadar, who commanded them, had known
The prison in Bedmár. So now, in talk
Foreign to Spanish ears, they said their minds,
Discussed their chief's intent, the lot marked out
For this new brother. Would he wed their queen?
And some denied, saying their queen would wed
A true Zincalo duke, — one who would join
Their bands in Telemsán. But others thought
Young Hassan was to wed her; said their chief
Would never trust this noble of Castile,

Who in his very swearing was forsworn.
And then one fell to chanting, in wild notes
Recurrent like the moan of outshut winds,
The adjuration they were wont to use
To any Spaniard who would join their tribe:
Words of plain Spanish, lately stirred anew
And ready at new impulse. Soon the rest,
Drawn to the stream of sound, made unison
Higher and lower, till the tidal sweep
Seemed to assail the Duke and close him round
With force demonic. All debate till now
Had wrestled with the urgence of that oath
Already broken; now the newer oath
Thrust its loud presence on him. He stood still,
Close baited by loud-barking thoughts, — fierce hounds
Of that Supreme, the irreversible Past.

The ZINCALI *sing*

Brother, hear and take the curse,
Curse of soul's and body's throes,
If you hate not all our foes,
Cling not fast to all our woes,
Turn a false Zincalo!
May you be accurst
By hunger and by thirst,
By spikéd pangs,
Starvation's fangs
Clutching you alone
When none but peering vultures hear your moan.

Curst by burning hands,
Curst by aching brow,
When on sea-wide sands
Fever lays you low;
By the maddened brain

When the running water glistens,
And the deaf ear listens, listens,
Prisoned fire within the vein
On the tongue and on the lip
Not a sip
From the earth or skies;
Hot the desert lies
Pressed into your anguish,
Narrowing earth and narrowing sky
Into lonely misery.
Lonely may you languish
Through the day and through the night,
Hate the darkness, hate the light,
Pray and find no ear,
Feel no brother near,
Till on death you cry,
Death who passes by,
And anew you groan,
Scaring the vultures all to leave you living lone:
Curst by soul's and body's throes
If you love the dark men's foes,
Cling not fast to all the dark men's woes,
Turn a false Zincalo!
Swear to hate the cruel cross,
The silver cross!
Glittering, laughing at the blood
Shed below it in a flood
When it glitters over Moorish porches;
Laughing at the scent of flesh
When it glitters where the fagot scorches,
Burning life's mysterious mesh:
Blood of wandering Israël,
Blood of wandering Ismaël,
Blood, the drink of Christian scorn,
Blood of wanderers, sons of morn
Where the life of men began:

Swear to hate the cross! —
Sign of all the wanderers' foes,
Sign of all the wanderers' woes, —
Else its curse light on you!
Else the curse upon you light
Of its sharp red-sworded might.
May it lie a blood-red blight
On all things within your sight:
On the white haze of the morn,
On the meadows and the corn,
On the sun and on the moon,
On the clearness of the noon,
On the darkness of the night.
May it fill your aching sight, —
Red-cross sword and sword blood-red, —
Till it press upon your head,
Till it lie within your brain,
Piercing sharp, a cross of pain,
Till it lie upon your heart,
Burning hot, a cross of fire,
Till from sense in every part
Pains have clustered like a stinging swarm
In the cross's form,
And you see naught but the cross of blood,
And you feel naught but the cross of fire:
Curst by all the cross's throes
If you hate not all our foes,
Cling not fast to all our woes,
Turn a false Zincalo!

A fierce delight was in the Gypsies' chant:
They thought no more of Silva, only felt
Like those broad-chested rovers of the night
Who pour exuberant strength upon the air.
To him it seemed as if the hellish rhythm,
Revolving in long curves that slackened now,

Now hurried, sweeping round again to slackness,
Would cease no more. What use to raise his voice,
Or grasp his weapon? He was powerless now,
With these new comrades of his future, — he
Who had been wont to have his wishes feared
And guessed at as a hidden law for men.
Even the passive silence of the night
That left these howlers mastery, even the moon,
Rising and staring with a helpless face,
Angered him. He was ready now to fly
At some loud throat, and give the signal so
For butchery of himself.
But suddenly
The sounds that travelled towards no foreseen close
Were torn right off and fringed into the night;
Sharp Gypsy ears had caught the onward strain
Of kindred voices joining in the chant.
All started to their feet and mustered close,
Auguring long-waited summons. It was come:
The summons to set forth and join their chief.
Fedalma had been called, and she was gone
Under safe escort, Juan following her:
The camp — the women, children, and old men —
Were moving slowly southward on the way
To Almería. Silva learned no more.
He marched perforce; what other goal was his
Than where Fedalma was? And so he marched
Through the dim passes and o'er rising hills,
Not knowing whither, till the morning came.

The Moorish hall in the castle at Bedmár. The morning twilight dimly shows stains of blood on the white marble floor; yet there has been a careful restoration of order among the sparse objects of furniture. Stretched on mats lie three corpses,

the faces bare, the bodies covered with mantles. A little way off, with rolled matting for a pillow, lies ZARCA, *sleeping. His chest and arms are bare; his weapons, turban, mail-shirt, and other upper garments lie on the floor beside him. In the outer gallery Zincali are pacing, at intervals, past the arched openings.*

ZARCA (*half rising and resting his elbow on the pillow while he looks round*)

The morning! I have slept for full three hours;
Slept without dreams, save of my daughter's face.
Its sadness waked me. Soon she will be here,
Soon must outlive the worst of all the pains
Bred by false nurture in an alien home, —
As if a lion in fangless infancy
Learned love of creatures that with fatal growth
It scents as natural prey, and grasps and tears,
Yet with heart-hunger yearns for, missing them.
She is a lioness. And they — the race
That robbed me of her — reared her to this pain.
He will be crushed and torn. There was no help.
But she, my child, will bear it. For strong souls
Live like fire-hearted suns to spend their strength
In furthest striving action; breathe more free
In mighty anguish than in trivial ease.
Her sad face waked me. I shall meet it soon
Waking . . . .

(*He rises and stands looking at the corpses.*)

As now I look on these pale dead,
These blossoming branches crushed beneath the fall
Of that broad trunk to which I laid my axe
With fullest foresight. So will I ever face
In thought beforehand to its utmost reach
The consequences of my conscious deeds;

So face them after, bring them to my bed,
And never drug my soul to sleep with lies.
If they are cruel, they shall be arraigned
By that true name; they shall be justified
By my high purpose, by the clear-seen good
That grew into my vision as I grew,
And makes my nature's function, the full pulse
Of my Zincalo soul. The Catholics,
Arabs, and Hebrews have their god apiece
To fight and conquer for them, or be bruised
Like Allah, and yet keep avenging stores
Of patient wrath. Zincali have no god
Who speaks to them and calls them his, unless
I Zarca carry living in my frame
The power divine that chooses them and saves.
Life and more life unto the chosen, death
To all things living that would stifle them!
So speaks each god that makes a nation strong;
Burns trees and brutes and slays all hindering men
The Spaniards boast their god the strongest now;
They win most towns by treachery, make most slaves,
Burn the most vines and men, and rob the most.
I fight against that strength, and in my turn
Slay these brave young who duteously strove.
Cruel? ay, it is cruel. But, how else?
To save, we kill; each blow we strike at guilt
Hurts innocence with its shock. Men might well seek
For purifying rites; even pious deeds
Need washing. But my cleansing waters flow
Solely from my intent.

(*He turns away from the bodies to where his garments lie, but does not lift them.*)

And she must suffer!

But she has looked on the unchangeable and bowed
Her head beneath the yoke. And she will walk
No more in chilling twilight, for to-day
Rises our sun. The difficult night is past;
We keep the bridge no more, but cross it; march
Forth to a land where all our wars shall be
With greedy obstinate plants that will not yield
Fruit for their nurture. All our race shall come
From north, west, east, a kindred multitude,
And make large fellowship, and raise inspired
The shout divine, the unison of resolve.
So I, so she, will see our race redeemed.
And their keen love of family and tribe
Shall no more thrive on cunning, hide and lurk
In petty arts of abject hunted life,
But grow heroic in the sanctioning light,
And feed with ardent blood a nation's heart.
That is my work: and it is well begun.
On to achievement!

(*He takes up the mail-shirt, and looks at it, then throws it down again.*)

No, I 'll none of you!
To-day there 'll be no fighting. A few hours,
And I shall doff these garments of the Moor:
Till then I will walk lightly and breathe high.

SEPHARDO (*appearing at the archway leading into the outer gallery*)

You bade me wake you . . . .

ZARCA

Welcome, Doctor; see,
With that small task I did but beckon you
To graver work. You know these corpses?

SEPHARDO

Yes.
I would they were not corpses. Storms will lay
The fairest trees and leave the withered stumps.
This Alvar and the Duke were of one age,
And very loving friends. I minded not
The sight of Don Diego's corpse, for death
Gave him some gentleness, and had he lived
I had still hated him. But this young Alvar
Was doubly noble, as a gem that holds
Rare virtues in its lustre, and his death
Will pierce Don Silva with a poisoned dart.
This fair and curly youth was Arias,
A son of the Pachecos; this dark face —

ZARCA

Enough! you know their names. I had divined
That they were near the Duke, most like had served
My daughter, were her friends. So rescued them
From being flung upon the heap of slain.
Beseech you, Doctor, if you owe me aught
As having served your people, take the pains
To see these bodies buried decently.
And let their names be writ above their graves,
As those of brave young Spaniards who died well.
I needs must bear this womanhood in my heart, —
Bearing my daughter there. For once she prayed, —
'T was at our parting, — "When you see fair hair
Be pitiful." And I am forced to look
On fair heads living and be pitiless.
Your service, Doctor, will be done to her.

SEPHARDO

A service doubly dear. For these young dead,
And one less happy Spaniard who still lives,

Are offerings which I wrenched from out my heart,
Constrained by cries of Israel: while my hands
Rendered the victims at command, my eyes
Closed themselves vainly, as if vision lay
Through those poor loopholes only. I will go
And see the graves dug by some cypresses.

ZARCA

Meanwhile the bodies shall rest here. Farewell.

[*Exit* SEPHARDO.)

Nay, 't is no mockery. She keeps me so
From hardening with the hardness of my acts.
This Spaniard shrouded in her love, — I would
He lay here too that I might pity him.

Morning. — The Plaça Santiago in Bedmár. A crowd of townsmen forming an outer circle: within, Zincali and Moorish soldiers drawn up round the central space. On the higher ground in front of the church a stake with fagots heaped, and at a little distance a gibbet. Moorish music. ZARCA *enters, wearing his gold necklace with the Gypsy badge of the flaming torch over the dress of a Moorish captain, accompanied by a small band of armed Zincali, who fall aside and range themselves with the other soldiers while he takes his stand in front of the stake and gibbet. The music ceases, and there is expectant silence.*

ZARCA

Men of Bedmár, well-wishers, and allies,
Whether of Moorish or of Hebrew blood,
Who, being galled by the hard Spaniard's yoke,
Have welcomed our quick conquest as release,
I, Zarca, the Zincalo chieftain, hold

By delegation of the Moorish King
Supreme command within this town and fort.
Nor will I, with false show of modesty,
Profess myself unworthy of this post,
For so I should but tax the giver's choice.
And, as ye know, while I was prisoner here,
Forging the bullets meant for Moorish hearts,
But likely now to reach another mark,
I learned the secrets of the town's defence,
Caught the loud whispers of your discontent,
And so could serve the purpose of the Moor
As the edge's keenness serves the weapon's weight.
And my Zincali, lynx-eyed, lithe of limb,
Tracked out the high Sierra's hidden path,
Guided the hard ascent, and were the first
To scale the walls and brave the showering stones.
In brief, I reached this rank through service done
By thought of mine and valour of my tribe,
Yet hold it but in trust, with readiness
To lay it down; for I and my Zincali
Will never pitch our tents again on land
The Spaniard grudges us: we seek a home
Where we may spread and ripen like the corn
By blessing of the sun and spacious earth.
Ye wish us well, I think, and are our friends?

CROWD

Long life to Zarca and his strong Zincali!

ZARCA

Now, for the cause of our assembling here.
'T was my command that rescued from your hands
That Spanish Prior and Inquisitor
Whom in fierce retribution you had bound
And meant to burn, tied to a planted cross.

I rescued him with promise that his death
Should be more signal in its justice, — made
Public in fullest sense, and orderly.
Here, then, you see the stake, — slow death by fire;
And there a gibbet, — swift death by the cord.
Now hear me, Moors and Hebrews of Bedmár,
Our kindred by the warmth of Eastern blood!
Punishing cruel wrong by cruelty
We copy Christian crime. Vengeance is just:
Justly we rid the earth of human fiends
Who carry hell for pattern in their souls.
But in high vengeance there is noble scorn:
It tortures not the torturer, nor gives
Iniquitous payment for iniquity.
The great avenging angel does not crawl
To kill the serpent with a mimic fang;
He stands erect, with sword of keenest edge
That slays like lightning. So too we will slay
The cruel man; slay him because he works
Woe to mankind. And I have given command
To pile these fagots, not to burn quick flesh,
But for a sign of that dire wrong to men
Which arms our wrath with justice. While, to show
This Christian worshipper that we obey
A better law than his, he shall be led
Straight to the gibbet and to swiftest death.
For I, the chief of the Zincali, will,
My people shed no blood but what is shed
In heat of battle or in judgment strict
With calm deliberation on the right.
Such is my will, and if it please you, — well.

CROWD

It pleases us. Long life to Zarca!

ZARCA

Hark!
The bell is striking, and they bring even now
The prisoner from the fort. What, Nadar?

NADAR (*has appeared, cutting the crowd, and advancing toward* ZARCA *till he is near enough to speak in an undertone*)

Chief,
I have obeyed your word, have followed it
As water does the furrow in the rock.

ZARCA

Your band is here?

NADAR

Yes, and the Spaniard too.

ZARCA

'T was so I ordered.

NADAR

Ay, but this sleek hound,
Who slipped his collar off to join the wolves,
Has still a heart for none but kennelled brutes.
He rages at the taking of the town,
Says all his friends are butchered; and one corpse
He stumbled on, — well, I would sooner be
A dead Zincalo's dog, and howl for him,
Than be this Spaniard. Rage has made him whiter.
One townsman taunted him with his escape,
And thanked him for so favouring us. . . .

ZARCA

Enough!
You gave him my command that he should wait
Within the castle, till I saw him?

NADAR

Yes.
But he defied me, broke away, ran loose
I know not whither; he may soon be here.
I came to warn you, lest he work us harm.

ZARCA

Fear not, I know the road I travel by:
Its turns are no surprises. He who rules
Must humour full as much as he commands;
Must let men vow impossibilities;
Grant folly's prayers that hinder folly's wish
And serve the ends of wisdom. Ah, he comes!

[Sweeping like some pale herald from the dead,
Whose shadow-nurtured eyes, dazed by full light,
See naught without, but give reverted sense
To the soul's imagery, Silva came,
The wondering people parting wide to get
Continuous sight of him as he passed on, —
This high hidalgo, who through blooming years
Had shone on men with planetary calm,
Believed in with all sacred images
And saints that must be taken as they were,
Though rendering meagre service for men's praise
Bareheaded now, carrying an unsheathed sword,
And on his breast, where late he bore the cross,
Wearing the Gypsy badge, his form aslant,
Driven, it seemed, by some invisible chase,
Right to the front of Zarca. There he paused.]

DON SILVA

Chief, you are treacherous, cruel, devilish, —
Relentless as a curse that once let loose
From lips of wrath, lives bodiless to destroy,
And darkly traps a man in nets of guilt
Which could not weave themselves in open day
Before his eyes. Oh, it was bitter wrong
To hold this knowledge locked within your mind,
To stand with waking eyes in broadest light,
And see me, dreaming, shed my kindred's blood.
'T is horrible that men with hearts and hands
Should smile in silence like the firmament
And see a fellow-mortal draw a lot
On which themselves have written agony!
Such injury has no redress, no healing
Save what may lie in stemming further ill.
Poor balm for maiming! Yet I come to claim it.

ZARCA

First prove your wrongs, and I will hear your claim.
Mind, you are not commander of Bedmár,
Nor duke, nor knight, nor anything for me,
Save one Zincalo, one of my subject tribe,
Over whose deeds my will is absolute.
You chose that lot, and would have railed at me
Had I refused it you: I warned you first
What oaths you had to take . . .

DON SILVA

You never warned me
That you had linked yourself with Moorish men
To take this town and fortress of Bedmár, —
Slay my near kinsmen, him who held my place,
Our house's heir and guardian, — slay my friend,

My chosen brother, — desecrate the church
Where once my mother held me in her arms,
Making the holy chrism holier
With tears of joy that fell upon my brow!
You never warned . . .

ZARCA

I warned you of your oath.
You shrank not, were resolved, were sure your place
Would never miss you, and you had your will.
I am no priest, and keep no consciences:
I keep my own place and my own command.

DON SILVA

I said my place would never miss me — yes!
A thousand Spaniards died on that same day
And were not missed; their garments clothed the backs
That else were bare . . .

ZARCA

But you were just the one
Above the thousand, had you known the die
That fate was throwing then.

DON SILVA

You knew it, — you!
With fiendish knowledge, smiling at the end.
You knew what snares had made my flying steps
Murderous; you let me lock my soul with oaths
Which your acts made a hellish sacrament.
I say, you knew this as a fiend would know it,
And let me damn myself.

ZARCA

The deed was done
Before you took your oath, or reached our camp, —
Done when you slipped in secret from the post
'T was yours to keep, and not to meditate
If others might not fill it. For your oath,
What man is he who brandishes a sword
In darkness, kills his friends, and rages then
Against the night that kept him ignorant?
Should I, for one unstable Spaniard, quit
My steadfast ends as father and as chief;
Renounce my daughter and my people's hope,
Lest a deserter should be made ashamed?

DON SILVA

Your daughter, — O great God! I vent but madness.
The past will never change. I come to stem
Harm that may yet be hindered. Chief — this stake —
Tell me who is to die! Are you not bound
Yourself to him you took in fellowship?
The town is yours; let me but save the blood
That still is warm in men who were my . . .

ZARCA

Peace!
They bring the prisoner.

[Zarca waved his arm
With head averse, in peremptory sign
That 'twixt them now there should be space and silence.
Most eyes had turned to where the prisoner
Advanced among his guards; and Silva too

Turned eagerly, all other striving quelled
By striving with the dread lest he should see
His thought outside him. And he saw it there.
The prisoner was Father Isidor:
The man whom once he fiercely had accused
As author of his misdeeds, — whose designs
Had forced him into fatal secrecy.
The imperious and inexorable Will
Was yoked, and he who had been pitiless
To Silva's love, was led to pitiless death.
O hateful victory of blind wishes, — prayers
Which hell had overheard and swift fulfilled!
The triumph was a torture, turning all
The strength of passion into strength of pain.
Remorse was born within him, that dire birth
Which robs all else of nurture, — cancerous,
Forcing each pulse to feed its anguish, changing
All sweetest residues of a healthy life
To fibrous clutches of slow misery.
Silva had but rebelled, — he was not free;
And all the subtle cords that bound his soul
Were tightened by the strain of one rash leap
Made in defiance. He accused no more,
But dumbly shrank before accusing throngs
Of thoughts, the impetuous recurrent rush
Of all his past-created, unchanged self.
The Father came bareheaded, frocked, a rope
Around his neck, — but clad with majesty,
The strength of resolute undivided souls
Who, owning law, obey it. In his hand
He bore a crucifix, and praying, gazed
Solely on that white image. But his guards
Parted in front, and paused as they approached
The centre, where the stake was. Isidor
Lifted his eyes to look around him, — calm,
Prepared to speak last words of willingness

To meet his death,—last words of faith unchanged,
That, working for Christ's kingdom, he had
wrought
Righteously. But his glance met Silva's eyes
And drew him. Even images of stone
Look living with reproach on him who maims,
Profanes, defiles them. Silva penitent
Moved forward, would have knelt before the man
Who still was one with all the sacred things
That came back on him in their sacredness,
Kindred, and oaths, and awe, and mystery.
But, at the sight, the Father thrust the cross
With deprecating act before him, and his face
Pale-quivering, flashed out horror like white light
Flashed from the angel's sword that dooming drave
The sinner to the wilderness. He spoke.]

FATHER ISIDOR

Back from me, traitorous and accursed man!
Defile not me, who grasp the holiest,
With touch or breath! Thou foulest murderer!
Fouler than Cain who struck his brother down
In jealous rage, thou for thy base delight
Hast oped the gate for wolves to come and tear
Uncounted brethren, weak and strong alike,
The helpless priest, the warrior all unarmed
Against a faithless leader: on thy head
Will rest the sacrilege, on thy soul the blood.
These blind Zincali, misbelievers, Moors,
Are but as Pilate and his soldiery;
Thou, Judas, weighted with that heaviest crime
Which deepens hell! I warned you of this end.
A traitorous leader, false to God and man,
A knight apostate, you shall soon behold
Above your people's blood the light of flames
Kindled by you to burn me,—burn the flesh

Twin with your father's. O most wretched man!
Whose memory shall be of broken oaths, —
Broken for lust, — I turn away mine eyes
Forever from you. See, the stake is ready:
And I am ready too.

DON SILVA

It shall not be!

(*Raising his sword he rushes in front of the guards who are advancing, and impedes them.*)

If you are human, Chief, hear my demand!
Stretch not my soul upon the endless rack
Of this man's torture!

ZARCA

Stand aside, my lord!
Put up your sword. You vowed obedience
To me, your Chief. It was your latest vow.

DON SILVA

No! hew me from the spot, or fasten me
Amid the fagots too, if he must burn.

ZARCA

What should befall that persecuting monk
Was fixed before you came: no cruelty,
No nicely measured torture, weight for weight
Of injury, no luscious-toothed revenge
That justifies the injurer by its joy:
I seek but rescue and security
For harmless men, and such security
Means death to vipers and inquisitors.
These fagots shall but innocently blaze

In sign of gladness, when this man is dead,
That one more torturer has left the earth.
'T is not for infidels to burn live men
And ape the rules of Christian piety.
This hard oppressor shall not die by fire:
He mounts the gibbet, dies a speedy death,
That, like a transfixed dragon, he may cease
To vex mankind. Quick, guards, and clear the path!

[As well-trained hounds that hold their fleetness tense
In watchful, loving fixity of dark eyes,
And move with movement of their master's will,
The Gypsies with a wavelike swiftness met
Around the Father, and in wheeling course
Passed beyond Silva to the gibbet's foot,
Behind their chieftain. Sudden left alone
With weapon bare, the multitude aloof,
Silva was mazed in doubtful consciousness,
As one who slumbering in the day awakes
From striving into freedom, and yet feels
His sense half captive to intangible things;
Then with a flush of new decision sheathed
His futile naked weapon, and strode quick
To Zarca, speaking with a voice new-toned,
The struggling soul's hoarse, suffocated cry
Beneath the grappling anguish of despair.]

DON SILVA

Zincalo, devil, blackest infidel!
You cannot hate that man as you hate me!
Finish your torture, — take me, — lift me up
And let the crowd spit at me, — every Moor
Shoot reeds at me, and kill me with slow death
Beneath the midday fervour of the sun, —

Or crucify me with a thieving hound, —
Slake your hate so, and I will thank it: spare me
Only this man.

ZARCA

Madman, I hate you not.
But if I did, my hate were poorly served
By my device, if I should strive to mix
A bitterer misery for you than to taste
With leisure of a soul in unharmed limbs
The flavour of your folly. For my course,
It has a goal, and takes no truant path
Because of you. I am your Chief: to me
You are but a Zincalo in revolt.

DON SILVA

No, I am no Zincalo! I disown
The name I took in madness. Here I tear
This badge away. I am a Catholic knight,
A Spaniard who will die a Spaniard's death!

[Hark! while he casts the badge upon the ground
And tramples on it, Silva hears a shout:
Was it a shout that threatened him? He looked
From out the dizzying flames of his own rage
In hope of adversaries, — and he saw above
The form of Father Isidor upswung
Convulsed with martyr throes; and knew the shout
For wonted exultation of the crowd
When malefactors die, — or saints, or heroes.
And now to him that white-frocked murdered form
Which hanging judged him as its murderer,
Turned to a symbol of his guilt, and stirred
Tremors till then unwaked. With sudden snatch
At something hidden in his breast, he strode
Right upon Zarca: at the instant, down

Fell the great Chief, and Silva, staggering back,
Heard not the shriek of the Zincali, felt
Not their fierce grasp, — heard, felt but Zarca's
words
Which seemed his soul outleaping in a cry
And urging men to run like rival waves
Whose rivalry is but obedience.]

ZARCA (*as he falls*)

My daughter! call her! Call my daughter!

NADAR (*supporting* ZARCA *and crying to the Gypsies who have clutched* SILVA)

Stay!
Tear not the Spaniard, tie him to the stake:
Hear what the Chief shall bid us, — there is time!

[Swiftly they tied him, pleasing vengeance so
With promise that would leave them free to watch
Their stricken good, their Chief stretched helplessly
Pillowed upon the strength of loving limbs.
He heaved low groans, but would not spend his
breath
In useless words: he waited till *she* came,
Keeping his life within the citadel
Of one great hope. And now around him closed
(But in wide circle, checked by loving fear)
His people all, holding their wails suppressed
Lest death believed-in should be over-bold:
All life hung on their Chief, — he would not die;
His image gone, there were no wholeness left
To make a world of for Zincali's thought.
Eager they stood, but hushed; the outer crowd
Spoke only in low murmurs, and some climbed

And clung with legs and arms on perilous coigns,
Striving to see where that colossal life
Lay panting, — lay a Titan struggling still
To hold and give the precious hidden fire
Before the stronger grappled him. Above
The young bright morning cast athwart white walls
Her shadows blue, and with their clear-cut line,
Mildly inexorable as the dial-hand's
Measured the shrinking future of an hour
Which held a shrinking hope. And all the while
The silent beat of time in each man's soul
Made aching pulses.
But the cry, " She comes! "
Parted the crowd like waters: and she came.
Swiftly as once before, inspired with joy,
She flashed across the space and made new light,
Glowing upon the glow of evening,
So swiftly now she came, inspired with woe,
Strong with the strength of all her father's pain,
Thrilling her as with fire of rage divine
And battling energy. She knew, — saw all:
The stake with Silva bound, — her father pierced, —
To this she had been born: the second time
Her father called her to the task of life.
She knelt beside him. Then he raised himself,
And on her face there flashed from his the light
As of a star that waned and flames anew
In mighty dissolution: 't was the flame
Of a surviving trust, in agony.
He spoke the parting prayer that was command,
Must sway her will, and reign invisibly.]

ZARCA

My daughter, you have promised, — you will live
To save our people. In my garments here
I carry written pledges from the Moor:
He will keep faith in Spain and Africa.
Your weakness may be stronger than my strength,
Winning more love. I cannot tell the end.
I held my people's good within my breast.
Behold, now I deliver it to you.
See, it still breathes unstrangled, — if it dies,
Let not your failing will be murderer. Rise,
And tell our people now I wait in pain, —
I cannot die until I hear them say
They will obey you.

[Meek, she pressed her lips
With slow solemnity upon his brow,
Sealing her pledges. Firmly then she rose,
And met her people's eyes with kindred gaze,
Dark-flashing, fired by effort strenuous
Trampling on pain.]

FEDALMA

Zincali all, who hear!
Your Chief is dying: I his daughter live
To do his dying will. He asks you now
To promise me obedience as your Queen,
That we may seek the land he won for us,
And live the better life for which he toiled.
Speak now, and fill my father's dying ear
With promise that you will obey him dead,
Obeying me his child.

[Straightway arose
A shout of promise, sharpening into cries
That seemed to plead despairingly with death.]

THE ZINCALI

We will obey! Our Chief shall never die!
We will obey him, — will obey our Queen!

[The shout unanimous, the concurrent rush
Of many voices, quiring shook the air
With multitudinous wave: now rose, now fell,
Then rose again, the echoes following slow,
As if the scattered brethren of the tribe
Had caught afar and joïned the ready vow.
Then some could hold no longer, but must rush
To kiss his dying feet, and some to kiss
The hem of their Queen's garment. But she raised
Her hand to hush them. " Hark! your Chief may speak
Another wish." Quickly she kneeled again,
While they upon the ground kept motionless,
With head outstretched. They heard his words; for now,
Grasping at Nadar's arm, he spoke more loud,
As one who, having fought and conquered, hurls
His strength away with hurling off his shield.]

ZARCA

Let loose the Spaniard! give him back his sword;
He cannot move to any vengeance more, —
His soul is locked 'twixt two opposing crimes.
I charge you let him go unharmed and free
Now through your midst. . . .

[With that he sank again, —
His breast heaved strongly tow'rd sharp sudden falls,
And all his life seemed needed for each breath:
Yet once he spoke.]

My daughter, lay your arm
Beneath my head, — so, — bend and breathe on me.
I cannot see you more, — the Night is come.
Be strong, — remember, — I can only — die.

[His voice went into silence, but his breast
Heaved long and moaned: its broad strength kept a life
That heard naught, saw naught, save what once had been,
And what might be in days and realms afar, —
Which now in pale procession faded on
Toward the thick darkness. And she bent above
In sacramental watch to see great Death,
Companion of her future, who would wear
Forever in her eyes her father's form.

And yet she knew that hurrying feet had gone
To do the Chief's behest, and in her soul
He who was once its lord was being jarred
With loosening of cords, that would not loose
The tightening torture of his anguish. This, —
Oh she knew it! — knew it as martyrs knew
The prongs that tore their flesh, while yet their tongues
Refused the ease of lies. In moments high
Space widens in the soul. And so she knelt,
Clinging with piety and awed resolve
Beside this altar of her father's life,
Seeing long travel under solemn suns
Stretching beyond it; never turned her eyes,
Yet felt that Silva passed; beheld his face
Pale, vivid, all alone, imploring her
Across black waters fathomless.

And he passed.
The Gypsies made wide pathway, shrank aloof
As those who fear to touch the thing they hate,
Lest hate triumphant, mastering all the limbs,
Should tear, bite, crush, in spite of hindering will.
Slowly he walked, reluctant to be safe
And bear dishonoured life which none assailed;
Walked hesitatingly, all his frame instinct
With high-born spirit, never used to dread
Or crouch for smiles, yet stung, yet quivering
With helpless strength, and in his soul convulsed
By visions where pale horror held a lamp
Over wide-reaching crime. Silence hung round:
It seemed the Plaça hushed itself to hear
His footsteps and the Chief's deep dying breath.
Eyes quickened in the stillness, and the light
Seemed one clear gaze upon his misery.
And yet he could not pass her without pause:
One instant he must pause and look at her;
But with that glance at her averted head,
New-urged by pain he turned away and went,
Carrying forever with him what he fled, —
Her murdered love, — her love, a dear wronged ghost,
Facing him, beauteous, 'mid the throngs of hell.
O fallen and forsaken! were no hearts
Amid that crowd, mindful of what had been? —
Hearts such as wait on beggared royalty,
Or silent watch by sinners who despair?

Silva had vanished. That dismissed revenge
Made larger room for sorrow in fierce hearts;
And sorrow filled them. For the Chief was dead.
The mighty breast subsided slow to calm,
Slow from the face the ethereal spirit waned,
As wanes the parting glory from the heights,

And leaves them in their pallid majesty.
Fedalma kissed the marble lips and said,
"He breathes no more." And then a long loud wail
Poured out upon the morning, made her light
Ghastly as smiles on some fair maniac's face
Smiling unconscious o'er her bridegroom's corse.
The wailing men in eager press closed round,
And made a shadowing pall beneath the sun.
They lifted reverent the prostrate strength,
Sceptred anew by death. Fedalma walked
Tearless, erect, following the dead, — her cries
Deep smothering in her breast, as one who guides
Her children through the wilds, and sees and knows
Of danger more than they, and feels more pangs,
Yet shrinks not, groans not, bearing in her heart
Their ignorant misery and their trust in her.

BOOK V

THE eastward rocks of Almería's bay
Answer long farewells of the travelling sun
With softest glow as from an inward pulse
Changing and flushing: all the Moorish ships
Seem conscious too, and shoot out sudden shadows;
Their black hulls snatch a glory, and their sails
Show variegated radiance, gently stirred
Like broad wings poised. Two galleys moored apart
Show decks as busy as a home of ants
Storing new forage; from their sides the boats
Slowly pushed off, anon with flashing oar
Make transit to the quay's smooth-quarried edge
Where thronging Gypsies are in haste to lade
Each as it comes with grandames, babes, and wives,
Or with dust-tinted goods, the company
Of wandering years. Naught seems to lie unmoved,
For 'mid the throng the lights and shadows play,
And make all surface eager, while the boats
Sway restless as a horse that heard the shouts
And surging hum incessant. Naked limbs
With beauteous ease bend, lift, and throw, or raise
High signalling hands. The black-haired mother steps
Athwart the boat's edge, and with opened arms,
A wandering Isis outcast from the gods,
Leans towards her lifted little one. The boat
Full-laden cuts the waves, and dirge-like cries
Rise and then fall within it as it moves
From high to lower and from bright to dark.
Hither and thither, grave white-turbaned Moors

Move helpfully, and some bring welcome gifts,
Bright stuffs and cutlery, and bags of seed
To make new waving crops in Africa.
Others aloof with folded arms slow-eyed
Survey man's labour, saying, "God is great;"
Or seek with question deep the Gypsies' root,
And whether their false faith, being small, will prove
Less damning than the copious false creeds
Of Jews and Christians: Moslem subtlety
Found balanced reasons, warranting suspense
As to whose hell was deepest, — 't was enough
That there was room for all. Thus the sedate.
The younger heads were busy with the tale
Of that great Chief whose exploits helped the Moor.
And, talking still, they shouldered past their friends,
Following some lure which held their distant gaze
To eastward of the quay, where yet remained
A low black tent close guarded all around
By armed Zincali. Fronting it above,
Raised by stone steps that sought a jutting strand,
Fedalma stood and marked with anxious watch
Each laden boat the remnant lessening
Of cargo on the shore, or traced the course
Of Nadar to and fro in hard command
Of noisy tumult; imaging oft anew
How much of labour still deferred the hour
When they must lift the boat and bear away
Her father's coffin, and her feet must quit
This shore forever. Motionless she stood,
Black-crowned with wreaths of many-shadowed hair;
Black-robed, but wearing wide upon her breast
Her father's golden necklace and his badge.

Her limbs were motionless, but in her eyes
And in her breathing lip's soft tremulous curve
Was intense motion as of prisoned fire
Escaping subtly in outleaping thought.
She watches anxiously, and yet she dreams:
The busy moments now expand, now shrink
To narrowing swarms within the refluent space
Of changeful consciousness. For in her thought
Already she has left the fading shore,
Sails with her people, seeks an unknown land,
And bears the burning length of weary days
That parching fall upon her father's hope,
Which she must plant and see it wither only, —
Wither and die. She saw the end begun.
Zincali hearts were not unfaithful: she
Was centre to the savage loyalty
Which vowed obedience to Zarca dead.
But soon their natures missed the constant stress
Of his command, that, while it fired, restrained
By urgency supreme, and left no play
To fickle impulse scattering desire.
They loved their Queen, trusted in Zarca's child,
Would bear her o'er the desert on their arms
And think the weight a gladsome victory;
But that great force which knit them into one,
The invisible passion of her father's soul,
That wrought them visibly into its will,
And would have bound their lives with permanence,
Was gone. Already Hassan and two bands,
Drawn by fresh baits of gain, had newly sold
Their service to the Moors, despite her call,
Known as the echo of her father's will,
To all the tribe, that they should pass with her
Straightway to Telemsán. They were not moved
By worse rebellion than the wilful wish

To fashion their own service; they still meant
To come when it should suit them. But she said,
This is the cloud no bigger than a hand,
Sure-threatening. In a little while, the tribe
That was to be the ensign of the race,
And draw it into conscious union,
Itself would break in small and scattered bands
That, living on scant prey, would still disperse
And propagate forgetfulness. Brief years,
And that great purpose fed with vital fire
That might have glowed for half a century,
Subduing, quickening, shaping, like a sun, —
Would be a faint tradition, flickering low
In dying memories, fringing with dim light
The nearer dark.

Far, far the future stretched
Beyond that busy present on the quay,
Far her straight path beyond it. Yet she watched
To mark the growing hour, and yet in dream
Alternate she beheld another track,
And felt herself unseen pursuing it
Close to a wanderer, who with haggard gaze
Looked out on loneliness. The backward years —
Oh she would not forget them — would not drink
Of waters that brought rest, while he far off
Remembered. "Father, I renounced the joy, —
You must forgive the sorrow."

So she stood,
Her struggling life compressed into that hour,
Yearning, resolving, conquering; though she seemed
Still as a tutelary image sent
To guard her people and to be the strength
Of some rock-citadel.

Below her sat

Slim mischievous Hinda, happy, red-bedecked
With row of berries, grinning, nodding oft,
And shaking high her small dark arm and hand
Responsive to the black-maned Ismaël,
Who held aloft his spoil, and clad in skins
Seemed the Boy prophet of the wilderness
Escaped from tasks prophetic. But anon
Hinda would backward turn upon her knees,
And like a pretty loving hound would bend
To fondle her Queen's feet, then lift her head
Hoping to feel the gently pressing palm
Which touched the deeper sense. Fedalma knew,—
From out the black robe stretched her speaking hand
And shared the girl's content.

So the dire hours
Burdened with destiny, — the death of hopes
Darkening long generations, or the birth
Of thoughts undying, — such hours sweep along
In their aerial ocean measureless
Myriads of little joys, that ripen sweet
And soothe the sorrowful spirit of the world,
Groaning and travailing with the painful birth
Of slow redemption.

But emerging now
From eastward fringing lines of idling men
Quick Juan lightly sought the upward steps
Behind Fedalma, and two paces off,
With head uncovered, said in gentle tones,
"Lady Fedalma!" — (Juan's password now
Used by no other,) and Fedalma turned,
Knowing who sought her. He advanced a step,
And meeting straight her large calm questioning gaze,
Warned her of some grave purport by a face
That told of trouble. Lower still he spoke.

JUAN

Look from me, lady, towards a moving form
That quits the crowd and seeks the lonelier strand, —
A tall and gray-clad pilgrim . . .

[Solemnly
His low tones fell on her, as if she passed
Into religious dimness among tombs,
And trod on names in everlasting rest.
Lingeringly she looked, and then with voice
Deep and yet soft, like notes from some long chord
Responsive to thrilled air, said:]

FEDALMA

It is he!
[Juan kept silence for a little space,
With reverent caution, lest his lighter grief
Might seem a wanton touch upon her pain.
But time was urging him with visible flight,
Changing the shadows: he must utter all.]

JUAN

That man was young when last I pressed his hand, —
In that dread moment when he left Bedmár.
He has aged since: the week has made him gray.
And yet I knew him, — knew the white-streaked hair
Before I saw his face, as I should know
The tear-dimmed writing of a friend. See now, —
Does he not linger, — pause? — perhaps expect . . .

[Juan plead timidly: Fedalma's eyes
Flashed; and through all her frame there ran the shock
Of some sharp-wounding joy, like his who hastes

And dreads to come too late, and comes in time
To press a loved hand dying. She was mute
And made no gesture: all her being paused
In resolution, as some leonine wave
That makes a moment's silence ere it leaps.]

JUAN

He came from Carthagena, in a boat
Too slight for safety; yon small two-oared boat
Below the rock; the fisher-boy within
Awaits his signal. But the pilgrim waits . . .

FEDALMA

Yes, I will go! — Father, I owe him this,
For loving me made all his misery.
And we will look once more, — will say farewell
As in a solemn rite to strengthen us
For our eternal parting. Juan, stay
Here in my place, to warn me were there need.
And, Hinda, follow me!

[All men who watched
Lost her regretfully, then drew content
From thought that she must quickly come again,
And filled the time with striving to be near.
She, down the steps, along the sandy brink
To where he stood, walked firm; with quickened step
The moment when each felt the other saw.
He moved at sight of her: their glances met;
It seemed they could no more remain aloof
Than nearing waters hurrying into one.
Yet their steps slackened and they paused apart,
Pressed backward by the force of memories
Which reigned supreme as death above desire.

Two paces off they stood and silently
Looked at each other. Was it well to speak?
Could speech be clearer, stronger, tell them more
Than that long gaze of their renouncing love?
They passed from silence hardly knowing how;
It seemed they heard each other's thought before.]

DON SILVA

I go to be absolved, to have my life
Washed into fitness for an offering
To injured Spain. But I have naught to give
For that last injury to her I loved
Better than I loved Spain. I am accurst
Above all sinners, being made the curse
Of her I sinned for. Pardon! Penitence!
When they have done their utmost, still beyond
Out of their reach stands Injury unchanged
And changeless. I should see it still in heaven, —
Out of my reach, forever in my sight:
Wearing your grief, 't would hide the smiling seraphs.
I bring no puling prayer, Fedalma, — ask
No balm of pardon that may soothe my soul
For others' bleeding wounds: I am not come
To say, "Forgive me:" you must not forgive,
For you must see me ever as I am, —
Your father's . . .

FEDALMA

Speak it not! Calamity
Comes like a deluge and o'erfloods our crimes,
Till sin is hidden in woe. You — I — we two,
Grasping we knew not what, that seemed delight,
Opened the sluices of that deep.

DON SILVA

We two? —
Fedalma, you were blameless, helpless.

FEDALMA

No!
It shall not be that you did aught alone.
For when we loved I willed to reign in you,
And I was jealous even of the day
If it could gladden you apart from me.
And so, it must be that I shared each deed
Our love was root of.

DON SILVA

Dear! you share the woe, —
Nay, the worst dart of vengeance fell on you.

FEDALMA

Vengeance! She does but sweep us with her skirts, —
She takes large space, and lies a baleful light
Revolving with long years, — sees children's children,
Blights them in their prime. Oh, if two lovers leaned
To breathe one air and spread a pestilence,
They would but lie two livid victims dead
Amid the city of the dying. We
With our poor petty lives have strangled one
That ages watch for vainly.

DON SILVA

Deep despair
Fills all your tones as with slow agony.

Speak words that narrow anguish to some shape:
Tell me what dread is close before you?

FEDALMA

None.
No dread, but clear assurance of the end.
My father held within his mighty frame
A people's life: great futures died with him
Never to rise, until the time shall ripe
Some other hero with the will to save
The lost Zincali.

DON SILVA

Yet your people's shout —
I heard it — sounded as the plenteous rush
Of full-fed sources, shaking their wild souls
With power that promised sway.

FEDALMA

Ah yes, that shout
Came from full hearts: they meant obedience.
But they are orphaned: their poor childish feet
Are vagabond in spite of love, and stray
Forgetful after little lures. For me, —
I am but as the funeral urn that bears
The ashes of a leader.

DON SILVA

O great God!
What am I but a miserable brand
Lit by mysterious wrath? I lie cast down
A blackened branch upon the desolate ground
Where once I kindled ruin. I shall drink
No cup of purest water but will taste
Bitter with thy lone hopelessness, Fedalma.

FEDALMA

Nay, Silva, think of me as one who sees
A light serene and strong on one sole path
Which she will tread till death. . . .
He trusted me, and I will keep his trust:
My life shall be its temple. I will plant
His sacred hope within the sanctuary
And die its priestess, — though I die alone,
A hoary woman on the altar step,
Cold 'mid cold ashes. That is my chief good.
The deepest hunger of a faithful heart
Is faithfulness. Wish me naught else. And you, —
You too will live. . . .

DON SILVA

I go to Rome, to seek
The right to use my knightly sword again;
The right to fill my place and live or die
So that all Spaniards shall not curse my name.
I sat one hour upon the barren rock
And longed to kill myself; but then I said,
I will not leave my name in infamy,
I will not be perpetual rottenness
Upon the Spaniard's air. If I must sink
At last to hell, I will not take my stand
Among the coward crew who could not bear
The harm themselves had done, which others bore.
My young life yet may fill some bloody breach,
And I will take no pardon, not my own,
Not God's, — no pardon idly on my knees;
But it shall come to me upon my feet
And in the thick of action, and each deed
That carried shame and wrong shall be the sting
That drives me higher up the steep of honour

In deeds of duteous service to that Spain
Who nourished me on her expectant breast,
The heir of highest gifts. I will not fling
My earthly being down for carrion
To fill the air with loathing: I will be
The living prey of some fierce noble death
That leaps upon me while I move. Aloud
I said, "I will redeem my name," and then, —
I know not if aloud: I felt the words
Drinking up all my senses, — "She still lives.
I would not quit the dear familiar earth
Where both of us behold the selfsame sun,
Where there can be no strangeness 'twixt our thoughts
So deep as their communion." Resolute
I rose and walked. — Fedalma, think of me
As one who will regain the only life
Where he is other than apostate, — one
Who seeks but to renew and keep the vows
Of Spanish knight and noble. But the breach
Outside those vows — the fatal second breach —
Lies a dark gulf where I have naught to cast,
Not even expiation, — poor pretence,
Which changes naught but what survives the past.
And raises not the dead. That deep dark gulf
Divides us.

FEDALMA

Yes, forever. We must walk
Apart unto the end. Our marriage rite
Is our resolve that we will each be true
To high allegiance, higher than our love, —
Our dear young love, — its breath was happiness!
But it had grown upon a larger life
Which tore its roots asunder. We rebelled, —
The larger life subdued us. Yet we are wed;

For we shall carry each the pressure deep
Of the other's soul. I soon shall leave the shore.
The winds to-night will bear me far away.
My lord, farewell!

[He did not say "Farewell."
But neither knew that he was silent. She,
For one long moment, moved not. They knew naught
Save that they parted; for their mutual gaze
As with their soul's full speech forbade their hands
To seek each other, — those oft-clasping hands
Which had a memory of their own, and went
Widowed of one dear touch forevermore.
At last she turned and with swift movement passed,
Beckoning to Hinda, who was bending low
And lingered still to wash her shells, but soon
Leaping and scampering followed, while her Queen
Mounted the steps again and took her place,
Which Juan rendered silently.
And now
The press upon the quay was thinned; the ground
Was cleared of cumbering heaps, the eager shouts
Had sunk, and left a murmur more restrained
By common purpose. All the men ashore
Were gathering into ordered companies,
And with less clamour filled the waiting boats,
As if the speaking light commanded them
To quiet speed: for now the farewell glow
Was on the topmost heights, and where far ships
Were southward tending, tranquil, slow, and white
Upon the luminous meadow toward the verge.
The quay was in still shadow, and the boats
Went sombrely upon the sombre waves.
Fedalma watched again; but now her gaze

Takes in the eastward bay, where that small bark
Which held the fisher-boy floats weightier
With one more life, that rests upon the oar
Watching with her. He would not go away
Till she was gone; he would not turn his face
Away from her at parting: but the sea
Should widen slowly 'twixt their seeking eyes.

The time was coming. Nadar had approached.
Was the Queen ready? Would she follow now
Her father's body? For the largest boat
Was waiting at the quay, the last strong band
Of armed Zincali ranged themselves in lines
To guard her passage and to follow her.
"Yes, I am ready;" and with action prompt
They cast aside the Gypsy's wandering tomb,
And fenced the space from curious Moors who pressed
To see Chief Zarca's coffin as it lay.
They raised it slowly, holding it aloft
On shoulders proud to bear the heavy load.
Bound on the coffin lay the chieftain's arms,
His Gypsy garments and his coat of mail.
Fedalma saw the burden lifted high,
And then descending followed. All was still.
The Moors aloof could hear the struggling steps
Beneath the lowered burden at the boat,
The struggling calls subdued, till safe released
It lay within, the space around it filled
By black-haired Gypsies. Then Fedalma stepped
From off the shore and saw it flee away, —
The land that bred her helping the resolve
Which exiled her forever.

It was night
Before the ships weighed anchor and gave sail;
Fresh Night emergent in her clearness, lit

By the large crescent moon, with Hesperus
And those great stars that lead the eager host.
Fedalma stood and watched the little bark
Lying jet-black upon moon-whitened waves.
Silva was standing too. He too divined
A steadfast form that held him with its thought
And eyes that sought him vanishing: he saw
The waters widen slowly, till at last
Straining he gazed and knew not if he gazed
On aught but blackness overhung by stars.]

THE LEGEND OF JUBAL

WHEN Cain was driven from Jehovah's land
He wandered eastward, seeking some far strand
Ruled by kind gods who asked no offerings
Save pure field-fruits, as aromatic things,
To feed the subtler sense of frames divine
That lived on fragrance for their food and wine:
Wild joyous gods, who winked at faults and folly,
And could be pitiful and melancholy.
He never had a doubt that such gods were;
He looked within, and saw them mirrored there.
Some think he came at last to Tartary,
And some to Ind; but, howsoe'er it be,
His staff he planted where sweet waters ran,
And in that home of Cain the Arts began.

Man's life was spacious in the early world:
It paused, like some slow ship with sail unfurled
Waiting in seas by scarce a wavelet curled;
Beheld the low star-paces of the skies,
And grew from strength to strength through centuries;
Saw infant trees fill out their giant limbs,
And heard a thousand times the sweet bird's marriage hymns.

In Cain's young city none had heard of Death
Save him, the founder; and it was his faith
That here, away from harsh Jehovah's law,
Man was immortal, since no halt or flaw

In Cain's own frame betrayed six hundred years,
But dark as pines that autumn never sears
His locks thronged backward as he ran, his frame
Rose like the orbéd sun each morn the same,
Lake-mirrored to his gaze; and that red brand,
The scorching impress of Jehovah's hand,
Was still clear-edged to his unwearied eye,
Its secret firm in time-fraught memory.
He said, "My happy offspring shall not know
That the red life from out a man may flow
When smitten by his brother." True, his race
Bore each one stamped upon his new-born face
A copy of the brand no whit less clear;
But every mother held that little copy dear.

Thus generations in glad idlesse throve,
Nor hunted prey, nor with each other strove;
For clearest springs were plenteous in the land,
And gourds for cups; the ripe fruits sought the hand,
Bending the laden boughs with fragrant gold;
And for their roofs and garments wealth untold
Lay everywhere in grasses and broad leaves:
They laboured gently, as a maid who weaves
Her hair in mimic mats, and pauses oft
And strokes across her palm the tresses soft,
Then peeps to watch the poiséd butterfly,
Or little burdened ants that homeward hie.
Time was but leisure to their lingering thought,
There was no need for haste to finish aught;
But sweet beginnings were repeated still
Like infant babblings that no task fulfil;
For love, that loved not change, constrained the simple will.

Till, hurling stones in mere athletic joy,
Strong Lamech struck and killed his fairest boy,

And tried to wake him with the tenderest cries,
And fetched and held before the glazéd eyes
The things they best had loved to look upon;
But never glance or smile or sigh he won.
The generations stood around those twain
Helplessly gazing, till their father Cain
Parted the press, and said, "He will not wake;
This is the endless sleep, and we must make
A bed deep down for him beneath the sod;
For know, my sons, there is a mighty God
Angry with all man's race, but most with me.
I fled from out His land in vain! — 't is He
Who came and slew the lad, for He has found
This home of ours, and we shall all be bound
By the harsh bands of His most cruel will,
Which any moment may some dear one kill.
Nay, though we live for countless moons, at last
We and all ours shall die like summers past.
This is Jehovah's will, and He is strong;
I thought the way I travelled was too long
For Him to follow me: my thought was vain!
He walks unseen, but leaves a track of pain,
Pale Death His footprint is, and He will come
again!"

And a new spirit from that hour came o'er
The race of Cain: soft idlesse was no more,
But even the sunshine had a heart of care,
Smiling with hidden dread — a mother fair
Who folding to her breast a dying child
Beams with feigned joy that but makes sadness mild.
Death was now lord of Life, and at his word
Time, vague as air before, new terrors stirred,
With measured wing now audibly arose
Throbbing through all things to some unknown
close.

Now glad Content by clutching Haste was torn,
And Work grew eager, and Device was born.
It seemed the light was never loved before,
Now each man said, " 'T will go and come no more."
No budding branch, no pebble from the brook,
No form, no shadow but new dearness took
From the one thought that life must have an end;
And the last parting now began to send
Diffusive dread through love and wedded bliss,
Thrilling them into finer tenderness.
Then Memory disclosed her face divine,
That like the calm nocturnal lights doth shine
Within the soul, and shows the sacred graves,
And shows the presence that no sunlight craves,
No space, no warmth, but moves among them all;
Gone and yet here, and coming at each call,
With ready voice and eyes that understand,
And lips that ask a kiss, and dear responsive hand.

Thus to Cain's race death was tear-watered seed
Of various life and action-shaping need.
But chief the sons of Lamech felt the stings
Of new ambition, and the force that springs
In passion beating on the shores of fate.
They said, " There comes a night when all too late
The mind shall long to prompt the achieving hand,
The eager thought behind closed portals stand,
And the last wishes to the mute lips press
Buried ere death in silent helplessness.
Then while the soul its way with sound can cleave,
And while the arm is strong to strike and heave,
Let soul and arm give shape that will abide
And rule above our graves, and power divide
With that great god of day, whose rays must bend
As we shall make the moving shadows tend.

Come, let us fashion acts that are to be,
When we shall lie in darkness silently,
As our young brother doth, whom yet we see
Fallen and slain, but reigning in our will
By that one image of him pale and still."

For Lamech's sons were heroes of their race:
Jabal, the eldest, bore upon his face
The look of that calm river-god, the Nile,
Mildly secure in power that needs not guile.
But Tubal-Cain was restless as the fire
That glows and spreads and leaps from high to higher
Where'er is aught to seize or to subdue;
Strong as a storm he lifted or o'erthrew,
His urgent limbs like rounded granite grew,
Such granite as the plunging torrent wears
And roaring rolls around through countless years.
But strength that still on movement must be fed,
Inspiring thought of change, devices bred,
And urged his mind through earth and air to rove
For force that he could conquer if he strove,
For lurking forms that might new tasks fulfil
And yield unwilling to his stronger will.
Such Tubal-Cain. But Jubal had a frame
Fashioned to finer senses, which became
A yearning for some hidden soul of things,
Some outward touch complete on inner springs
That vaguely moving bred a lonely pain,
A want that did but stronger grow with gain
Of all good else, as spirits might be sad
For lack of speech to tell us they are glad.
Now Jabal learned to tame the lowing kine,
And from their udders drew the snow-white wine
That stirs the innocent joy, and makes the stream
Of elemental life with fulness teem;

The star-browed calves he nursed with feeding hand,
And sheltered them, till all the little band
Stood mustered gazing at the sunset way
Whence he would come with store at close of day.
He soothed the silly sheep with friendly tone
And reared their staggering lambs that, older grown,
Followed his steps with sense-taught memory;
Till he, their shepherd, could their leader be
And guide them through the pastures as he would,
With sway that grew from ministry of good.
He spread his tents upon the grassy plain
Which, eastward widening like the open main,
Showed the first whiteness 'neath the morning star;
Near him his sister, deft, as women are,
Plied her quick skill in sequence to his thought
Till the hid treasures of the milk she caught
Revealed like pollen 'mid the petals white,
The golden pollen, virgin to the light.
Even the she-wolf with young, on rapine bent,
He caught and tethered in his mat-walled tent,
And cherished all her little sharp-nosed young
Till the small race with hope and terror clung
About his footsteps, till each new-reared brood,
Remoter from the memories of the wood,
More glad discerned their common home with man.
This was the work of Jabal: he began
The pastoral life, and, sire of joys to be,
Spread the sweet ties that bind the family
O'er dear dumb souls that thrilled at man's caress,
And shared his pains with patient helpfulness.
But Tubal-Cain had caught and yoked the fire,
Yoked it with stones that bent the flaming spire
And made it roar in prisoned servitude
Within the furnace, till with force subdued

It changed all forms he willed to work upon,
Till hard from soft, and soft from hard, he won.
The pliant clay he moulded as he would,
And laughed with joy when 'mid the heat it stood
Shaped as his hand had chosen, while the mass
That from his hold, dark, obstinate, would pass,
He drew all glowing from the busy heat,
All breathing as with life that he could beat
With thundering hammer, making it obey
His will creative, like the pale soft clay.
Each day he wrought and better than he planned,
Shape breeding shape beneath his restless hand.
(The soul without still helps the soul within,
And its deft magic ends what we begin.)
Nay, in his dreams his hammer he would wield
And seem to see a myriad types revealed,
Then spring with wondering triumphant cry,
And, lest the inspiring vision should go by,
Would rush to labour with that plastic zeal
Which all the passion of our life can steal
For force to work with. Each day saw the birth
Of various forms which, flung upon the earth,
Seemed harmless toys to cheat the exacting hour,
But were as seeds instinct with hidden power.
The axe, the club, the spikéd wheel, the chain,
Held silently the shrieks and moans of pain;
And near them latent lay in share and spade,
In the strong bar, the saw, and deep-curved blade,
Glad voices of the hearth and harvest-home,
The social good, and all earth's joy to come.
Thus to mixed ends wrought Tubal; and they say,
Some things he made have lasted to this day;
As, thirty silver pieces that were found
By Noah's children buried in the ground.
He made them from mere hunger of device,
Those small white disks; but they became the price

The traitor Judas sold his Master for;
And men still handling them in peace and war
Catch foul disease, that comes as appetite,
And lurks and clings as withering, damning blight.
But Tubal-Cain wot not of treachery,
Nor greedy lust, nor any ill to be,
Save the one ill of sinking into naught,
Banished from action and act-shaping thought.
He was the sire of swift-transforming skill,
Which arms for conquest man's ambitious will;
And round him gladly, as his hammer rung,
Gathered the elders and the growing young:
These handled vaguely and those plied the tools,
Till, happy chance begetting conscious rules,
The home of Cain with industry was rife,
And glimpses of a strong persistent life,
Panting through generations as one breath,
And filling with its soul the blank of death.

Jubal, too, watched the hammer, till his eyes,
No longer following its fall or rise,
Seemed glad with something that they could not see,
But only listened to — some melody,
Wherein dumb longings inward speech had found,
Won from the common store of struggling sound.
Then, as the metal shapes more various grew,
And, hurled upon each other, resonance drew,
Each gave new tones, the revelations dim
Of some external soul that spoke for him:
The hollow vessel's clang, the clash, the boom,
Like light that makes wide spiritual room
And skyey spaces in the spaceless thought,
To Jubal such enlargéd passion brought
That love, hope, rage, and all experience,
Were fused in vaster being, fetching thence

Concords and discords, cadences and cries
That seemed from some world-shrouded soul to rise,
Some rapture more intense, some mightier rage,
Some living sea that burst the bounds of man's
brief age.

Then with such blissful trouble and glad care
For growth within unborn as mothers bear,
To the far woods he wandered, listening,
And heard the birds their little stories sing
In notes whose rise and fall seemed melted
speech —
Melted with tears, smiles, glances — that can reach
More quickly through our frame's deep-winding
night,
And without thought raise thought's best fruit,
delight.
Pondering, he sought his home again and heard
The fluctuant changes of the spoken word:
The deep remonstrance and the argued want,
Insistent first in close monotonous chant,
Next leaping upward to defiant stand
Or downward beating like the resolute hand;
The mother's call, the children's answering cry,
The laugh's light cataract tumbling from on high;
The suasive repetitions Jabal taught,
That timid browsing cattle homeward brought;
The clear-winged fugue of echoes vanishing;
And through them all the hammer's rhythmic
ring.
Jubal sat lonely, all around was dim,
Yet his face glowed with light revealed to him:
For as the delicate stream of odour wakes
The thought-wed sentience and some image makes
From out the mingled fragments of the past,
Finely compact in wholeness that will last,

So streamed as from the body of each sound
Subtler pulsations, swift as warmth, which found
All prisoned germs and all their powers unbound,
Till thought self-luminous flamed from memory,
And in creative vision wandered free.
Then Jubal, standing, rapturous arms upraised,
And on the dark with eager eyes he gazed,
As had some manifested god been there.
It was his thought he saw: the presence fair
Of unachieved achievement, the high task,
The struggling unborn spirit that doth ask
With irresistible cry for blood and breath,
Till feeding its great life we sink in death.

He said, "Were now those mighty tones and cries
That from the giant soul of earth arise,
Those groans of some great travail heard from far,
Some power at wrestle with the things that are,
Those sounds which vary with the varying form
Of clay and metal, and in sightless swarm
Fill the wide space with tremors: were these wed
To human voices with such passion fed
As does put glimmer in our common speech,
But might flame out in tones whose changing reach,
Surpassing meagre need, informs the sense
With fuller union, finer difference —
Were this great vision, now obscurely bright
As morning hills that melt in new-poured light,
Wrought into solid form and living sound,
Moving with ordered throb and sure rebound,
Then — Nay, I Jubal will that work begin!
The generations of our race shall win
New life, that grows from out the heart of this,
As spring from winter, or as lovers' bliss
From out the dull unknown of unwaked energies."

Thus he resolved and in the soul-fed light
Of coming ages waited through the night,
Watching for that near dawn whose chiller ray
Showed but the unchanged world of yesterday;
Where all the order of his dream divine
Lay like Olympian forms within the mine;
Where fervour that could fill the earthly round
With throngéd joys of form-begotten sound
Must shrink intense within the patient power
That lonely labours through the niggard hour.
Such patience have the heroes who begin,
Sailing the first to lands which others win.
Jubal must dare as great beginners dare,
Strike form's first way in matter rude and bare,
And, yearning vaguely toward the plenteous quire
Of the world's harvest, make one poor small lyre.
He made it, and from out its measured frame
Drew the harmonic soul, whose answers came
With guidance sweet and lessons of delight
Teaching to ear and hand the blissful Right,
Where strictest law is gladness to the sense
And all desire bends toward obedience.

Then Jubal poured his triumph in a song —
The rapturous word that rapturous notes prolong
As radiance streams from smallest things that burn,
Or thought of loving into love doth turn.
And still his lyre gave companionship
In sense-taught concert as of lip with lip.
Alone amid the hills at first he tried
His wingéd song; then with adoring pride
And bridegroom's joy at leading forth his bride,
He said, " This wonder which my soul hath found,
This heart of music in the might of sound,

Shall forthwith be the share of all our race
And like the morning gladden common space:
The song shall spread and swell as rivers do,
And I will teach our youth with skill to woo
This living lyre, to know its secret will,
Its fine division of the good and ill.
So shall men call me sire of harmony,
And where great Song is, there my life shall be."

Thus glorying as a god beneficent,
Forth from his solitary joy he went
To bless mankind. It was at evening,
When shadows lengthen from each westward thing,
When imminence of change makes sense more fine
And light seems holier in its grand decline.
The fruit-trees wore their studded coronal,
Earth and her children were at festival,
Glowing as with one heart and one consent —
Thought, love, trees, rocks, in sweet warm radiance blent.

The tribe of Cain was resting on the ground,
The various ages wreathed in one broad round.
Here lay, while children peeped o'er his huge thighs,
The sinewy man embrowned by centuries;
Here the broad-bosomed mother of the strong
Looked, like Demeter, placid o'er the throng
Of young lithe forms whose rest was movement too —
Tricks, prattle, nods, and laughs that lightly flew,
And swayings as of flower-beds where Love blew.
For all had feasted well upon the flesh
Of juicy fruits, on nuts, and honey fresh,
And now their wine was health-bred merriment,
Which through the generations circling went,

Leaving none sad, for even father Cain
Smiled as a Titan might, despising pain.
Jabal sat climbed on by a playful ring
Of children, lambs, and whelps, whose gambolling,
With tiny hoofs, paws, hands, and dimpled feet,
Made barks, bleats, laughs, in pretty hubbub meet.
But Tubal's hammer rang from far away,
Tubal alone would keep no holiday,
His furnace must not slack for any feast,
For of all hardship work he counted least;
He scorned all rest but sleep, where every dream
Made his repose more potent action seem.

Yet with health's nectar some strange thirst was
blent,
The fateful growth, the unnamed discontent,
The inward shaping toward some unborn power,
Some deeper-breathing act, the being's flower.
After all gestures, words, and speech of eyes,
The soul had more to tell, and broke in sighs.
Then from the east, with glory on his head
Such as low-slanting beams on corn-waves spread,
Came Jubal with his lyre: there 'mid the throng,
Where the blank space was, poured a solemn song,
Touching his lyre to full harmonic throb
And measured pulse, with cadences that sob,
Exult and cry, and search the inmost deep
Where the dark sources of new passion sleep.
Joy took the air, and took each breathing soul,
Embracing them in one entrancéd whole,
Yet thrilled each varying frame to various ends,
As Spring new-waking through the creature sends
Or rage or tenderness; more plenteous life
Here breeding dread, and there a fiercer strife.
He who had lived through twice three centuries,
Whose months monotonous, like trees on trees,

In hoary forests, stretched a backward maze,
Dreamed himself dimly through the travelled days
Till in clear light he paused, and felt the sun
That warmed him when he was a little one;
Felt that true heaven, the recovered past,
The dear small Known amid the Unknown vast,
And in that heaven wept. But younger limbs
Thrilled toward the future, that bright land which swims
In western glory, isles and streams and bays,
Where hidden pleasures float in golden haze.
And in all these the rhythmic influence,
Sweetly o'ercharging the delighted sense,
Flowed out in movements, little waves that spread
Enlarging, till in tidal union led
The youths and maidens both alike long-tressed,
By grace-inspiring melody possessed,
Rose in slow dance, with beauteous floating swerve
Of limbs and hair, and many a melting curve
Of ringéd feet swayed by each close-linked palm:
Then Jubal poured more rapture in his psalm,
The dance fired music, music fired the dance,
The glow diffusive lit each countenance,
Till all the gazing elders rose and stood
With glad yet awful shock of that mysterious good.
Even Tubal caught the sound, and wondering came,
Urging his sooty bulk like smoke-wrapt flame
Till he could see his brother with the lyre,
The work for which he lent his furnace-fire
And diligent hammer, witting naught of this —
This power in metal shape which made strange bliss,
Entering within him like a dream full-fraught
With new creations finished in a thought.

The sun had sunk, but music still was there,
And when this ceased, still triumph filled the air:
It seemed the stars were shining with delight
And that no night was ever like this night.
All clung with praise to Jubal: some besought
That he would teach them his new skill: some caught,
Swiftly as smiles are caught in looks that meet,
The tone's melodic change and rhythmic beat:
'T was easy following where invention trod —
All eyes can see when light flows out from God.

And thus did Jubal to his race reveal
Music their larger soul, where woe and weal
Filling the resonant chords, the song, the dance,
Moved with a wider-wingéd utterance.
Now many a lyre was fashioned, many a song
Raised echoes new, old echoes to prolong,
Till things of Jubal's making were so rife,
" Hearing myself," he said, " hems in my life,
And I will get me to some far-off land,
Where higher mountains under heaven stand
And touch the blue at rising of the stars,
Whose song they hear where no rough mingling mars
The great clear voices. Such lands there must be,
Where varying forms make varying symphony —
Where other thunders roll amid the hills,
Some mightier wind a mightier forest fills
With other strains through other-shapen boughs;
Where bees and birds and beasts that hunt or browse
Will teach me songs I know not. Listening there,
My life shall grow like trees both tall and fair
That rise and spread and bloom toward fuller fruit each year."

He took a raft, and travelled with the stream
Southward for many a league, till he might deem
He saw at last the pillars of the sky,
Beholding mountains whose white majesty
Rushed through him as new awe, and made new song
That swept with fuller wave the chords along,
Weighting his voice with deep religious chime,
The iteration of slow chant sublime.
It was the region long inhabited
By all the race of Seth; and Jubal said:
"Here have I found my thirsty soul's desire,
Eastward the hills touch heaven, and evening's fire
Flames through deep waters; I will take my rest,
And feed anew from my great mother's breast,
The sky-clasped Earth, whose voices nurture me
As the flowers' sweetness doth the honey-bee."
He lingered wandering for many an age,
And, sowing music, made high heritage
For generations far beyond the Flood —
For the poor late-begotten human brood
Born to life's weary brevity and perilous good.

And ever as he travelled he would climb
The farthest mountain, yet the heavenly chime,
The mighty tolling of the far-off spheres
Beating their pathway, never touched his ears.
But wheresoe'er he rose the heavens rose.
And the far-gazing mountain could disclose
Naught but a wider earth; until one height
Showed him the ocean stretched in liquid light,
And he could hear its multitudinous roar,
Its plunge and hiss upon the pebbled shore:
Then Jubal silent sat, and touched his lyre no more.

He thought, " The world is great, but I am weak,
And where the sky bends is no solid peak
To give me footing, but instead, this main —
Myriads of maddened horses thundering o'er the plain.

" New voices come to me where'er I roam,
My heart too widens with its widening home:
But song grows weaker, and the heart must break
For lack of voice, or fingers that can wake
The lyre's full answer; nay, its chords were all
Too few to meet the growing spirit's call.
The former songs seem little, yet no more
Can soul, hand, voice, with interchanging lore
Tell what the earth is saying unto me:
The secret is too great, I hear confusedly.

" No farther will I travel: once again
My brethren I will see, and that fair plain
Where I and Song were born. There fresh-voiced youth
Will pour my strains with all the early truth
Which now abides not in my voice and hands,
But only in the soul, the will that stands
Helpless to move. My tribe remembering
Will cry ' 'T is he!' and run to greet me, welcoming."

The way was weary. Many a date-palm grew,
And shook out clustered gold against the blue,
While Jubal, guided by the steadfast spheres,
Sought the dear home of those first eager years,
When, with fresh vision fed, the fuller will
Took living outward shape in pliant skill;
For still he hoped to find the former things,
And the warm gladness recognition brings.

His footsteps erred among the mazy woods
And long illusive sameness of the floods,
Winding and wandering. Through far regions strange
With Gentile homes and faces, did he range,
And left his music in their memory,
And left at last, when naught besides would free
His homeward steps from clinging hands and cries,
The ancient lyre. And now in ignorant eyes
No sign remained of Jubal, Lamech's son,
That mortal frame wherein was first begun
The immortal life of song. His withered brow
Pressed over eyes that held no lightning now,
His locks streamed whiteness on the hurrying air,
The unresting soul had worn itself quite bare
Of beauteous token, as the outworn might
Of oaks slow dying, gaunt in summer's light.
His full deep voice toward thinnest treble ran:
He was the rune-writ story of a man.

And so at last he neared the well-known land,
Could see the hills in ancient order stand
With friendly faces whose familiar gaze
Looked through the sunshine of his childish days;
Knew the deep-shadowed folds of hanging woods,
And seemed to see the selfsame insect broods
Whirling and quivering o'er the flowers — to hear
The selfsame cuckoo making distance near.
Yea, the dear Earth, with mother's constancy,
Met and embraced him, and said, " Thou art he!
This was thy cradle, here my breast was thine,
Where feeding, thou didst all thy life entwine
With my sky-wedded life in heritage divine."

But wending ever through the watered plain,
Firm not to rest save in the home of Cain,

He saw dread Change, with dubious face and cold
That never kept a welcome for the old,
Like some strange heir upon the hearth, arise
Saying, "This home is mine." He thought his eyes
Mocked all deep memories, as things new made,
Usurping sense, make old things shrink and fade
And seem ashamed to meet the staring day.
His memory saw a small foot-trodden way,
His eyes a broad far-stretching paven road
Bordered with many a tomb and fair abode;
The little city that once nestled low
As buzzing groups about some central glow,
Spread like a murmuring crowd o'er plain and steep,
Or monster huge in heavy-breathing sleep.
His heart grew faint, and tremblingly he sank
Close by the wayside on a weed-grown bank,
Not far from where a new-raised temple stood,
Sky-roofed, and fragrant with wrought cedar wood.
The morning sun was high; his rays fell hot
On this hap-chosen, dusty, common spot,
On the dry-withered grass and withered man:
That wondrous frame where melody began
Lay as a tomb defaced that no eye cared to scan.

But while he sank far music reached his ear.
He listened until wonder silenced fear
And gladness wonder; for the broadening stream
Of sound advancing was his early dream,
Brought like fulfilment of forgotten prayer;
As if his soul, breathed out upon the air,
Had held the invisible seeds of harmony
Quick with the various strains of life to be.
He listened: the sweet mingled difference
With charm alternate took the meeting sense;

Then bursting like some shield-broad lily red,
Sudden and near the trumpet's notes outspread,
And soon his eyes could see the metal flower,
Shining upturned, out on the morning pour
Its incense audible; could see a train
From out the street slow-winding on the plain
With lyres and cymbals, flutes and psalteries,
While men, youths, maids, in concert sang to these
With various throat, or in succession poured,
Or in full volume mingled. But one word
Ruled each recurrent rise and answering fall,
As when the multitudes adoring call
On some great name divine, their common soul,
The common need, love, joy, that knits them in one whole.

The word was "Jubal!" . . . "Jubal" filled the air
And seemed to ride aloft, a spirit there,
Creator of the quire, the full-fraught strain
That grateful rolled itself to him again.
The aged man adust upon the bank —
Whom no eye saw — at first with rapture drank
The bliss of music, then, with swelling heart,
Felt this was his own being's greater part,
The universal joy once born in him.
But when the train, with living face and limb
And vocal breath, came nearer and more near,
The longing grew that they should hold him dear;
Him, Lamech's son, whom all their fathers knew,
The breathing Jubal — him, to whom their love was due.
All was forgotten but the burning need
To claim his fuller self, to claim the deed
That lived away from him, and grew apart,
While he as from a tomb, with lonely heart,

Warmed by no meeting glance, no hand that pressed,
Lay chill amid the life his life had blessed.
What though his song should spread from man's small race
Out through the myriad worlds that people space,
And make the heavens one joy-diffusing quire? —
Still 'mid that vast would throb the keen desire
Of this poor aged flesh, this eventide,
This twilight soon in darkness to subside,
This little pulse of self that, having glowed
Through thrice three centuries, and divinely strowed
The light of music through the vague of sound,
Ached with its smallness still in good that had no bound.

For no eye saw him, while with loving pride
Each voice with each in praise of Jubal vied.
Must he in conscious trance, dumb, helpless lie
While all that ardent kindred passed him by?
His flesh cried out to live with living men
And join that soul which to the inward ken
Of all the hymning train was present there.
Strong passion's daring sees not aught to dare:
The frost-locked starkness of his frame low-bent,
His voice's penury of tones long spent,
He felt not; all his being leaped in flame
To meet his kindred as they onward came
Slackening and wheeling toward the temple's face:
He rushed before them to the glittering space,
And, with a strength that was but strong desire,
Cried, "I am Jubal, I! . . . I made the lyre!"

The tones amid a lake of silence fell
Broken and strained, as if a feeble bell

Had tuneless pealed the triumph of a land
To listening crowds in expectation spanned.
Sudden came showers of laughter on that lake;
They spread along the train from front to wake
In one great storm of merriment, while he
Shrank doubting whether he could Jubal be,
And not a dream of Jubal, whose rich vein
Of passionate music came with that dream-pain
Wherein the sense slips off from each loved thing
And all appearance is mere vanishing.
But ere the laughter died from out the rear,
Anger in front saw profanation near;
Jubal was but a name in each man's faith
For glorious power untouched by that slow death
Which creeps with creeping time; this too, the spot,
And this the day, it must be crime to blot,
Even with scoffing at a madman's lie:
Jubal was not a name to wed with mockery.
Two rushed upon him: two, the most devout
In honour of great Jubal, thrust him out,
And beat him with their flutes. 'T was little need;
He strove not, cried not, but with tottering speed,
As if the scorn and howls were driving wind
That urged his body, serving so the mind
Which could but shrink and yearn, he sought the screen
Of thorny thickets, and there fell unseen.
The immortal name of Jubal filled the sky,
While Jubal lonely laid him down to die.
He said within his soul, " This is the end:
O'er all the earth to where the heavens bend
And hem men's travel, I have breathed my soul:
I lie here now the remnant of that whole,
The embers of a life, a lonely pain;
As far-off rivers to my thirst were vain,
So of my mighty years naught comes to me again.

"Is the day sinking? Softest coolness springs
From something round me: dewy shadowy wings
Enclose me all around — no, not above —
Is moonlight there? I see a face of love,
Fair as sweet music when my heart was strong:
Yea — art thou come again to me, great Song?"

The face bent over him like silver night
In long-remembered summers; that calm light
Of days which shine in firmaments of thought,
That past unchangeable, from change still wrought.
And gentlest tones were with the vision blent:
He knew not if that gaze the music sent,
Or music that calm gaze: to hear, to see,
Was but one undivided ecstasy:
The raptured senses melted into one,
And parting life a moment's freedom won
From in and outer, as a little child
Sits on a bank and sees blue heavens mild
Down in the water, and forgets its limbs,
And knoweth naught save the blue heaven that swims.

"Jubal," the face said, "I am thy loved Past,
The soul that makes thee one from first to last.
I am the angel of thy life and death,
Thy outbreathed being drawing its last breath.
Am I not thine alone, a dear dead bride
Who blest thy lot above all men's beside?
Thy bride whom thou wouldst never change, nor take
Any bride living, for that dead one's sake?
Was I not all thy yearning and delight,
Thy chosen search, thy senses' beauteous Right,
Which still had been the hunger of thy frame
In central heaven, hadst thou been still the same?

Wouldst thou have asked aught else from any
god —
Whether with gleaming feet on earth he trod
Or thundered through the skies — aught else for
share
Of mortal good, than in thy soul to bear
The growth of song, and feel the sweet unrest
Of the world's spring-tide in thy conscious breast?
No, thou hadst grasped thy lot with all its pain,
Nor loosed it any painless lot to gain
Where music's voice was silent; for thy fate
Was human music's self incorporate:
Thy senses' keenness and thy passionate strife
Were flesh of *her* flesh and her womb of life.
And greatly hast thou lived, for not alone
With hidden raptures were her secrets shown,
Buried within thee, as the purple light
Of gems may sleep in solitary night;
But thy expanding joy was still to give,
And with the generous air in song to live,
Feeding the wave of ever-widening bliss
Where fellowship means equal perfectness.
And on the mountains in thy wandering
Thy feet were beautiful as blossomed spring,
That turns the leafless wood to love's glad home,
For with thy coming Melody was come.
This was thy lot, to feel, create, bestow,
And that immeasurable life to know
From which the fleshly self falls shrivelled, dead,
A seed primeval that has forests bred.
It is the glory of the heritage
Thy life has left, that makes thy outcast age:
Thy limbs shall lie dark, tombless on this sod,
Because thou shinest in man's soul, a god,
Who found and gave new passion and new joy
That naught but Earth's destruction can destroy.

Thy gifts to give was thine of men alone:
'T was but in giving that thou couldst atone
For too much wealth amid their poverty."

The words seemed melting into symphony,
The wings upbore him, and the gazing song
Was floating him the heavenly space along,
Where mighty harmonies all gently fell
Through veiling vastness, like the far-off bell,
Till, ever onward through the choral blue,
He heard more faintly and more faintly knew,
Quitting mortality, a quenched sun-wave,
The All-creating Presence for his grave.

1869

AGATHA

COME with me to the mountain, not where rocks
Soar harsh above the troops of hurrying pines,
But where the earth spreads soft and rounded breasts
To feed her children; where the generous hills
Lift a green isle betwixt the sky and plain
To keep some Old World things aloof from change.
Here too 't is hill and hollow: new-born streams
With sweet enforcement, joyously compelled
Like laughing children, hurry down the steeps,
And make a dimpled chase athwart the stones;
Pine woods are black upon the heights, the slopes
Are green with pasture, and the bearded corn
Fringes the blue above the sudden ridge:
A little world whose round horizon cuts
This isle of hills with heaven for a sea,
Save in clear moments when southwestward gleams
France by the Rhine, melting anon to haze.
The monks of old chose here their still retreat,
And called it by the Blessed Virgin's name,
Sancta Maria, which the peasant's tongue,
Speaking from out the parent's heart that turns
All loved things into little things, has made
Sanct Märgen — Holy little Mary, dear
As all the sweet home things she smiles upon,
The children and the cows, the apple-trees,
The cart, the plough, all named with that caress
Which feigns them little, easy to be held,
Familiar to the eyes and hand and heart.

What though a Queen? She puts her crown away
And with her little Boy wears common clothes,
Caring for common wants, remembering
That day when good Saint Joseph left his work
To marry her with humble trust sublime.
The monks are gone, their shadows fall no more
Tall-frocked and cowled athwart the evening fields
At milking-time; their silent corridors
Are turned to homes of bare-armed, aproned men,
Who toil for wife and children. But the bells,
Pealing on high from two quaint convent towers,
Still ring the Catholic signals, summoning
To grave remembrance of the larger life
That bears our own, like perishable fruit
Upon its heaven-wide branches. At their sound
The shepherd boy far off upon the hill,
The workers with the saw and at the forge,
The triple generation round the hearth —
Grandames and mothers and the flute-voiced girls —
Fall on their knees and send forth prayerful cries
To the kind Mother with the little Boy,
Who pleads for helpless men against the storm,
Lightning and plagues and all terrific shapes
Of power supreme.
Within the prettiest hollow of these hills,
Just as you enter it, upon the slope
Stands a low cottage neighboured cheerily
By running water, which, at farthest end
Of the same hollow, turns a heavy mill,
And feeds the pasture for the miller's cows,
Blanchi and Nägeli, Veilchen and the rest,
Matrons with faces as Griselda mild,
Coming at call. And on the farthest height
A little tower looks out above the pines
Where mounting you will find a sanctuary

Open and still; without, the silent crowd
Of heaven-planted, incense-mingling flowers;
Within, the altar where the Mother sits
'Mid votive tablets hung from far-off years
By peasants succoured in the peril of fire,
Fever, or flood, who thought that Mary's love,
Willing but not omnipotent, had stood
Between their lives and that dread power which slew
Their neighbour at their side. The chapel bell
Will melt to gentlest music ere it reach
That cottage on the slope, whose garden gate
Has caught the rose-tree boughs and stands ajar;
So does the door, to let the sunbeams in;
For in the slanting sunbeams angels come
And visit Agatha who dwells within —
Old Agatha, whose cousins Kate and Nell
Are housed by her in Love and Duty's name,
They being feeble, with small withered wits,
And she believing that the higher gift
Was given to be shared. So Agatha,
Shares her one room, all neat on afternoons,
As if some memory were sacred there
And everything within the four low walls
An honoured relic.

One long summer's day
An angel entered at the rose-hung gate,
With skirts pale blue, a brow to quench the pearl,
Hair soft and blonde as infants', plenteous
As hers who made the wavy lengths once speak
The grateful worship of a rescued soul.
The angel paused before the open door
To give good day. " Come in," said Agatha.
I followed close, and watched and listened there.
The angel was a lady, noble, young,
Taught in all seemliness that fits a court,

All lore that shapes the mind to delicate use,
Yet quiet, lowly, as a meek white dove
That with its presence teaches gentleness.
Men called her Countess Linda; little girls
In Freiburg town, orphans whom she caressed,
Said Mamma Linda: yet her years were few,
Her outward beauties all in budding time,
Her virtues the aroma of the plant
That dwells in all its being, root, stem, leaf,
And waits not ripeness.

"Sit," said Agatha.
Her cousins were at work in neighbouring homes
But yet she was not lonely; all things round
Seemed filled with noiseless yet responsive life,
As of a child at breast that gently clings:
Not sunlight only or the breathing flowers
Or the swift shadows of the birds and bees,
But all the household goods, which, polished fair
By hands that cherished them for service done,
Shone as with glad content. The wooden beams
Dark and yet friendly, easy to be reached,
Bore three white crosses for a speaking sign;
The walls had little pictures hung a-row,
Telling the stories of Saint Ursula,
And Saint Elizabeth, the lowly queen;
And on the bench that served for table too,
Skirting the wall to save the narrow space,
There lay the Catholic books, inherited
From those old times when printing still was young
With stout-limbed promise, like a sturdy boy.
And in the farthest corner stood the bed
Where o'er the pillow hung two pictures wreathed
With fresh-plucked ivy: one the Virgin's death,
And one her flowering tomb, while high above
She smiling bends and lets her girdle down

For ladder to the soul that cannot trust
In life which outlasts burial. Agatha
Sat at her knitting, aged, upright, slim,
And spoke her welcome with mild dignity.
She kept the company of kings and queens
And mitred saints who sat below the feet
Of Francis with the ragged frock and wounds;
And Rank for her meant Duty, various,
Yet equal in its worth, done worthily.
Command was service; humblest service done
By willing and discerning soul was glory.
Fair Countess Linda sat upon the bench,
Close fronting the old knitter, and they talked
With sweet antiphony of young and old.

AGATHA

You like our valley, lady? I am glad
You thought it well to come again. But rest —
The walk is long from Master Michael's inn.

COUNTESS LINDA

Yes, but no walk is prettier.

AGATHA

It is true:
There lacks no blessing here, the waters all
Have virtues like the garments of the Lord,
And heal much sickness; then, the crops and cows
Flourish past speaking, and the garden flowers,
Pink, blue, and purple, 't is a joy to see
How they yield honey for the singing bees.
I would the whole world were as good a home.

COUNTESS LINDA

And you are well off, Agatha? — your friends
Left you a certain bread: is it not so?

AGATHA

Not so at all, dear lady. I had naught,
Was a poor orphan; but I came to tend
Here in this house, an old afflicted pair,
Who wore out slowly; and the last who died,
Full thirty years ago, left me this roof
And all the household stuff. It was great wealth,
And so I had a home for Kate and Nell.

COUNTESS LINDA

But how, then, have you earned your daily bread
These thirty years?

AGATHA

Oh, that is easy earning.
We help the neighbours, and our bit and sup
Is never failing: they have work for us
In house and field, all sorts of odds and ends,
Patching and mending, turning o'er the hay,
Holding sick children — there is always work;
And they are very good — the neighbours are:
Weigh not our bits of work with weight and scale,
But glad themselves with giving us good shares
Of meat and drink; and in the big farmhouse
When cloth comes home from weaving, the good wife
Cuts me a piece — this very gown — and says:
"Here, Agatha, you old maid, you have time
To pray for Hans who is gone soldiering:
The saints might help him, and they have much to do,
'T were well they were besought to think of him."
She spoke half jesting, but I pray, I pray
For poor young Hans. I take it much to heart

That other people are worse off than I —
I ease my soul with praying for them all.

COUNTESS LINDA

That is your way of singing, Agatha;
Just as the nightingales pour forth sad songs,
And when they reach men's ears they make men's hearts
Feel the more kindly.

AGATHA

Nay, I cannot sing:
My voice is hoarse, and oft I think my prayers
Are foolish, feeble things; for Christ is good
Whether I pray or not — the Virgin's heart
Is kinder far than mine; and then I stop
And feel I can do naught toward helping men,
Till out it comes, like tears that will not hold,
And I must pray again for all the world.
'T is good to me — I mean the neighbours are:
To Kate and Nell too. I have money saved
To go on pilgrimage the second time.

COUNTESS LINDA

And do you mean to go on pilgrimage
With all your years to carry, Agatha?

AGATHA

The years are light, dear lady: 't is my sins
Are heavier than I would. And I shall go
All the way to Einsiedeln with that load.
I need to work it off.

COUNTESS LINDA

What sort of sins,
Dear Agatha? I think they must be small.

AGATHA

Nay, but they may be greater than I know;
'T is but dim light I see by. So I try
All ways I know of to be cleansed and pure.
I would not sink where evil spirits are.
There 's perfect goodness somewhere: so I strive.

COUNTESS LINDA

You were the better for that pilgrimage
You made before? The shrine is beautiful;
And then you saw fresh country all the way.

AGATHA

Yes, that is true. And ever since that time
The world seems greater, and the Holy Church
More wonderful. The blessed pictures all,
The heavenly images with books and wings,
Are company to me through the day and night.
The time! the time! It never seemed far back,
Only to father's father and his kin
That lived before him. But the time stretched out
After that pilgrimage: I seemed to see
Far back, and yet I knew time lay behind,
As there are countries lying still behind
The highest mountains, there in Switzerland.
Oh, it is great to go on pilgrimage!

COUNTESS LINDA

Perhaps some neighbours will be pilgrims too,
And you can start together in a band.

AGATHA

Not from these hills: people are busy here,
The beasts want tendance. One who is not missed
Can go and pray for others who must work.
I owe it to all neighbours, young and old;
For they are good past thinking — lads and girls
Given to mischief, merry naughtiness,
Quiet it, as the hedgehogs smooth their spines,
For fear of hurting poor old Agatha.
'T is pretty: why, the cherubs in the sky
Look young and merry, and the angels play
On citherns, lutes, and all sweet instruments.
I would have young things merry. See the Lord!
A little baby playing with the birds;
And how the Blessed Mother smiles at him.

COUNTESS LINDA

I think you are too happy, Agatha,
To care for heaven. Earth contents you well.

AGATHA

Nay, nay, I shall be called, and I shall go
Right willingly. I shall get helpless, blind,
Be like an old stalk to be plucked away:
The garden must be cleared for young spring plants.
'T is home beyond the grave, the most are there,
All those we pray to, all the Church's lights —
And poor old souls are welcome in their rags:
One sees it by the pictures. Good Saint Ann,
The Virgin's mother, she is very old,
And had her troubles with her husband too.
Poor Kate and Nell are younger far than I,
But they will have this roof to cover them.

I shall go willingly; and willingness
Makes the yoke easy and the burden light.

COUNTESS LINDA

When you go southward in your pilgrimage,
Come to see me in Freiburg, Agatha.
Where you have friends you should not go to inns.

AGATHA

Yes, I will gladly come to see you, lady,
And you will give me sweet hay for a bed.
And in the morning I shall wake betimes
And start when all the birds begin to sing.

COUNTESS LINDA

You wear your smart clothes on the pilgrimage,
Such pretty clothes as all the women here
Keep by them for their best: a velvet cap
And collar golden-broidered? They look well
On old and young alike.

AGATHA

Nay, I have none —
Never had better clothes than these you see.
Good clothes are pretty, but one sees them best
When others wear them, and I somehow thought
'T was not worth while. I had so many things
More than some neighbours, I was partly shy
Of wearing better clothes than they, and now
I am so old and custom is so strong
'T would hurt me sore to put on finery.

COUNTESS LINDA

Your gray hair is a crown, dear Agatha.
Shake hands; good-bye. The sun is going down.
And I must see the glory from the hill.

I stayed among those hills; and oft heard more
Of Agatha. I liked to hear her name,
As that of one half grandame and half saint,
Uttered with reverent playfulness. The lads
And younger men all called her mother, aunt,
Or granny, with their pet diminutives,
And bade their lasses and their brides behave
Right well to one who surely made a link
'Twixt faulty folk and God by loving both:
Not one but counted service done by her,
Asking no pay save just her daily bread.
At feasts and weddings, when they passed in groups
Along the vale, and the good country wine,
Being vocal in them, made them quire along
In quaintly mingled mirth and piety,
They fain must jest and play some friendly trick
On three old maids; but when the moment came
Always they bated breath and made their sport
Gentle as feather-stroke, that Agatha
Might like the waking for the love it showed.
Their song made happy music 'mid the hills,
For nature tuned their race to harmony,
And poet Hans, the tailor, wrote them songs
That grew from out their life, as crocuses
From out the meadow's moistness. 'T was his song
They oft sang, wending homeward from a feast —
The song I give you. It brings in, you see,
Their gentle jesting with the three old maids.

Midnight by the chapel bell!
Homeward, homeward all, farewell!
I with you, and you with me,
Miles are short with company.
Heart of Mary, bless the way,
Keep us all by night and day!

Moon and stars at feast with night
Now have drunk their fill of light.
Home they hurry, making time
Trot apace, like merry rhyme.
Heart of Mary, mystic rose,
Send us all a sweet repose!

Swiftly through the wood down hill,
Run till you can hear the mill.
Toni's ghost is wandering now,
Shaped just like a snow-white cow.
Heart of Mary, morning star,
Ward off danger, near or far!

Toni's wagon with its load
Fell and crushed him in the road
'Twixt these pine-trees. Never fear!
Give a neighbour's ghost good cheer.
Holy Babe, our God and Brother,
Bind us fast to one another!

Hark! the mill is at its work,
Now we pass beyond the murk
To the hollow, where the moon
Makes her silvery afternoon.
Good Saint Joseph, faithful spouse,
Help us all to keep our vows!

Here the three old maidens dwell,
Agatha and Kate and Nell;
See, the moon shines on the thatch,
We will go and shake the latch.
Heart of Mary, cup of joy,
Give us mirth without alloy!

Hush, 't is here, no noise, sing low,
Rap with gentle knuckles — so!
Like the little tapping birds,
On the door; then sing good words.
Meek Saint Anna, old and fair,
Hallow all the snow-white hair!

Little maidens old, sweet dreams!
Sleep one sleep till morning beams.
Mothers ye, who help us all,
Quick at hand, if ill befall.
Holy Gabriel, lily-laden,
Bless the aged mother-maiden!

Forward, mount the broad hillside
Swift as soldiers when they ride.
See the two towers how they peep,
Round-capped giants, o'er the steep.
Heart of Mary, by thy sorrow,
Keep us upright through the morrow!

Now they rise quite suddenly
Like a man from bended knee,
Now Saint Märgen is in sight.
Here the roads branch off — good-night.
Heart of Mary, by thy grace,
Give us with the saints a place!

ARMGART

SCENE I

A Salon lit with lamps and ornamented with green plants. An open piano, with many scattered sheets of music. Bronze busts of Beethoven and Gluck on pillars opposite each other. A small table spread with supper. To FRÄULEIN WALPURGA, *who advances with a slight lameness of gait from an adjoining room, enters* GRAF DORNBERG *at the opposite door in a travelling dress.*

GRAF

Good-morning, Fräulein!

WALPURGA

What, so soon returned?
I feared your mission kept you still at Prague.

GRAF

But now arrived! You see my travelling dress.
I hurried from the panting, roaring steam
Like any courier of embassy
Who hides the fiends of war within his bag.

WALPURGA

You know that Armgart sings to-night?

GRAF

Has sung!
'T is close on half-past nine. The *Orpheus*

Lasts not so long. Her spirits — were they high?
Was Leo confident?

WALPURGA

He only feared
Some tameness at beginning. Let the house
Once ring, he said, with plaudits, she is safe.

GRAF

And Armgart?

WALPURGA

She was stiller than her wont.
But once, at some such trivial word of mine,
As that the highest prize might yet be won
By her who took the second — she was roused.
"For me," she said, "I triumph or I fail.
I never strove for any second prize."

GRAF

Poor human-hearted singing-bird! She bears
Cæsar's ambition in her delicate breast,
And naught to still it with but quivering song!

WALPURGA

I had not for the world been there to-night:
Unreasonable dread oft chills me more
Than any reasonable hope can warm.

GRAF

You have a rare affection for your cousin;
As tender as a sister's.

WALPURGA

Nay, I fear
My love is little more than what I felt
For happy stories when I was a child.
She fills my life that would be empty else,
And lifts my naught to value by her side.

GRAF

She is reason good enough, or seems to be,
Why all were born whose being ministers
To her completeness. Is it most her voice
Subdues us? or her instinct exquisite,
Informing each old strain with some new grace
Which takes our sense like any natural good?
Or most her spiritual energy
That sweeps us in the current of her song?

WALPURGA

I know not. Losing either, we should lose
That whole we call our Armgart. For herself
She often wonders what her life had been
Without that voice for channel to her soul.
She says, it must have leaped through all her limbs —
Made her a Mænad — made her snatch a brand
And fire some forest, that her rage might mount
In crashing roaring flames through half a land,
Leaving her still and patient for a while.
"Poor wretch!" she says, of any murderess —
"The world was cruel, and she could not sing:
I carry my revenges in my throat;
I love in singing, and am loved again."

GRAF

Mere mood! I cannot yet believe it more.
Too much ambition has unwomaned her;
But only for a while. Her nature hides
One half its treasures by its very wealth,
Taxing the hours to show it.

WALPURGA

Hark! she comes.

(*Enter* LEO *with a wreath in his hand, holding the door open for* ARMGART, *who wears a furred mantle and hood. She is followed by her maid, carrying an armful of bouquets.*)

LEO

Place for the queen of song!

GRAF (*advancing toward* ARMGART, *who throws off her hood and mantle, and shows a star of brilliants in her hair*)

A triumph, then.
You will not be a niggard of your joy
And chide the eagerness that came to share it.

ARMGART

O kind! you hastened your return for me.
I would you had been there to hear me sing!
Walpurga, kiss me: never tremble more
Lest Armgart's wing should fail her. She has found
This night the region where her rapture breathes —
Pouring her passion on the air made live

With human heart-throbs. Tell them, Leo, tell
them
How I outsang your hope and made you cry
Because Gluck could not hear me. That was folly!
He sang, not listened: every linkéd note
Was his immortal pulse that stirred in mine,
And all my gladness is but part of him.
Give me the wreath.

(*She crowns the bust of Gluck.*)

LEO (*sardonically*)

Ay, ay, but mark you this:
It was not part of him — that trill you made
In spite of me and reason!

ARMGART

You were wrong —
Dear Leo, you were wrong: the house was held
As if a storm were listening with delight
And hushed its thunder.

LEO

Will you ask the house
To teach you singing? Quit your *Orpheus* then,
And sing in farces grown to operas,
Where all the prurience of the full-fed mob
Is tickled with melodic impudence:
Jerk forth burlesque bravuras, square your arms
Akimbo with a tavern wench's grace,
And set the splendid compass of your voice
To lyric jigs. Go to! I thought you meant
To be an artist — lift your audience
To see your vision, not trick forth a show
To please the grossest taste of grossest numbers.

ARMGART (*taking up* LEO'S *hand and kissing it*)

Pardon, good Leo, I am penitent.
I will do penance: sing a hundred trills
Into a deep-dug grave, then burying them
As one did Midas' secret, rid myself
Of naughty exultation. Oh I trilled
At nature's prompting, like the nightingales.
Go scold them, dearest Leo.

LEO

I stop my ears.
Nature in Gluck inspiring Orpheus,
Has done with nightingales. Are bird-beaks lips?

GRAF

Truce to rebukes! Tell us—who were not there —
The double drama: how the expectant house
Took the first notes.

WALPURGA (*turning from her occupation of decking the room with the flowers*)

Yes, tell us all, dear Armgart.
Did you feel tremors? Leo, how did she look?
Was there a cheer to greet her?

LEO

Not a sound.
She walked like Orpheus in his solitude,
And seemed to see naught but what no man saw.
'T was famous. Not the Schroeder-Devrient
Had done it better. But your blessed public
Had never any judgment in cold blood —
Thinks all perhaps were better otherwise,
Till rapture brings a reason.

ARMGART (*scornfully*)

I knew that!
The women whispered, "Not a pretty face!"
The men, "Well, well, a goodly length of limb;
She bears the chiton." — It were all the same
Were I the Virgin Mother and my stage
The opening heavens at the Judgment-day:
Gossips would peep, jog elbows, rate the price
Of such a woman in the social mart.
What were the drama of the world to them,
Unless they felt the hell-prong?

LEO

Peace, now, peace;
I hate my phrases to be smothered o'er
With sauce of paraphrase, my sober tune
Made bass to rambling trebles, showering down
In endless demi-semi-quavers.

ARMGART (*taking a bon-bon from the table, uplifting it before putting it into her mouth, and turning away*)

Mum!

GRAF

Yes, tell us all the glory, leave the blame.

WALPURGA

You first, dear Leo — what you saw and heard;
Then Armgart — she must tell us what she felt.

LEO

Well! The first notes came clearly, firmly forth.
And I was easy, for behind those rills

I knew there was a fountain. I could see
The house was breathing gently, heads were still;
Parrot opinion was struck meekly mute,
And human hearts were swelling. Armgart stood
As if she had been new-created there
And found her voice which found a melody.
The minx! Gluck had not written, nor I taught:
Orpheus was Armgart, Armgart Orpheus.
Well, well, all through the *scena* I could feel
The silence tremble now, now poise itself
With added weight of feeling, till at last
Delight o'er-toppled it. The final note
Had happy drowning in the unloosed roar
That surged and ebbed and ever surged again,
Till expectation kept it pent awhile
Ere Orpheus returned. Pfui! He was changed:
My demi-god was pale, had downcast eyes
That quivered like a bride's who fain would send
Backward the rising tear.

ARMGART (*advancing, but then turning away, as if to check her speech*)

I *was* a bride,
As nuns are at their spousals.

LEO

Ay, my lady,
That moment will not come again: applause
May come and plenty; but the first, first draught!
(*Snaps his fingers.*)
Music has sounds for it — I know no words.
I felt it once myself when they performed
My overture to Sintram. Well! 't is strange,
We know not pain from pleasure in such joy.

ARMGART (*turning quickly*)

Oh, pleasure has cramped dwelling in our souls,
And when full Being comes must call on pain
To lend it liberal space.

WALPURGA

I hope the house
Kept a reserve of plaudits: I am jealous
Lest they had dulled themselves for coming good
That should have seemed the better and the best.

LEO

No, 't was a revel where they had but quaffed
Their opening cup. I thank the artist's star,
His audience keeps not sober: once afire,
They flame toward climax though his merit hold
But fairly even.

ARMGART (*her hand on* LEO'S *arm*)

Now, now, confess the truth:
I sang still better to the very end —
All save the trill; I give that up to you,
To bite and growl at. Why, you said yourself,
Each time I sang, it seemed new doors were oped
That you might hear heaven clearer.

LEO (*shaking his finger*)

I was raving.

ARMGART

I am not glad with that mean vanity
Which knows no good beyond its appetite
Full feasting upon praise! I am only glad,
Being praised for what I know is worth the praise;

Glad of the proof that I myself have part
In what I worship! At the last applause —
Seeming a roar of tropic winds that tossed
The handkerchiefs and many-coloured flowers,
Falling like shattered rainbows all around —
Think you I felt myself a *prima donna?*
No, but a happy spiritual star
Such as old Dante saw, wrought in a rose
Of light in Paradise, whose only self
Was consciousness of glory wide-diffused,
Music, life, power — I moving in the midst
With a sublime necessity of good.

LEO (*with a shrug*)

I thought it was a *prima donna* came
Within the side-scenes; ay, and she was proud
To find the bouquet from the royal box
Enclosed a jewel-case, and proud to wear
A star of brilliants, quite an earthly star,
Valued by thalers. Come, my lady, own
Ambition has five senses, and a self
That gives it good warm lodging when it sinks
Plump down from ecstasy.

ARMGART

Own it? why not?
Am I a sage whose words must fall like seed
Silently buried toward a far-off spring?
I sing to living men and my effect
Is like the summer's sun, that ripens corn
Or now or never. If the world brings me gifts,
Gold, incense, myrrh — 't will be the needful sign
That I have stirred it as the high year stirs
Before I sink to winter.

GRAF

Ecstasies
Are short — most happily! We should but lose
Were Armgart borne too commonly and long
Out of the self that charms us. Could I choose,
She were less apt to soar beyond the reach
Of woman's foibles, innocent vanities,
Fondness for trifles like that pretty star
Twinkling beside her cloud of ebon hair.

ARMGART (*taking out the gem and looking at it*)

This little star! I would it were the seed
Of a whole Milky Way, if such bright shimmer
Were the sole speech men told their rapture with
At Armgart's music. Shall I turn aside
From splendours which flash out the glow I make,
And live to make, in all the chosen breasts
Of half a Continent? No, may it come,
That splendour! May the day be near when men
Think much to let my horses draw me home,
And new lands welcome me upon their beach,
Loving me for my fame. That is the truth
Of what I wish, nay, yearn for. Shall I lie?
Pretend to seek obscurity — to sing
In hope of disregard? A vile pretence!
And blasphemy besides. For what is fame
But the benignant strength of One, transformed
To joy of Many? Tributes, plaudits come
As necessary breathing of such joy;
And may they come to me!

GRAF

The auguries
Point clearly that way. Is it no offence
To wish the eagle's wing may find repose,

As feebler wings do, in a quiet nest?
Or has the taste of fame already turned
The Woman to a Muse . . .

LEO (*going to the table*)

Who needs no supper.
I am her priest, ready to eat her share
Of good Walpurga's offerings.

WALPURGA

Armgart, come.
Graf, will you come?

GRAF

Thanks, I play truant here,
And must retrieve my self-indulged delay.
But will the Muse receive a votary
At any hour to-morrow?

ARMGART

Any hour
After rehearsal, after twelve at noon.

SCENE II

The same Salon, morning. ARMGART *seated, in her bonnet and walking-dress. The* GRAF *standing near her against the piano.*

GRAF

Armgart, to many minds the first success
Is reason for desisting. I have known
A man so versatile, he tried all arts,
But when in each by turns he had achieved
Just so much mastery as made men say,

"He could be king here if he would," he threw
The lauded skill aside. He hates, said one,
The level of achieved pre-eminence,
He must be conquering still; but others said —

ARMGART

The truth, I hope: he had a meagre soul,
Holding no depth where love could root itself.
"Could if he would?" True greatness ever wills —
It lives in wholeness if it live at all,
And all its strength is knit with constancy.

GRAF

He used to say himself he was too sane
To give his life away for excellence
Which yet must stand, an ivory statuette
Wrought to perfection through long lonely years,
Huddled in the mart of mediocrities.
He said, the very finest doing wins
The admiring only; but to leave undone,
Promise and not fulfil, like buried youth,
Wins all the envious, makes them sigh your name
As that fair Absent, blameless Possible,
Which could alone impassion them; and thus,
Serene negation has free gift of all,
Panting achievement struggles, is denied,
Or wins to lose again. What say you, Armgart?
Truth has rough flavours if we bite it through;
I think this sarcasm came from out its core
Of bitter irony.

ARMGART

It is the truth
Mean souls select to feed upon. What then?
Their meanness is a truth, which I will spurn.

The praise I seek lives not in envious breath
Using my name to blight another's deed.
I sing for love of song and that renown
Which is the spreading act, the world-wide share,
Of good that I was born with. Had I failed —
Well, that had been a truth most pitiable.
I cannot bear to think what life would be
With high hope shrunk to endurance, stunted aims
Like broken lances ground to eating-knives,
A self sunk down to look with level eyes
At low achievement, doomed from day to day
To distaste of its consciousness. But I —

GRAF

Have won, not lost, in your decisive throw.
And I too glory in this issue; yet,
The public verdict has no potency
To sway my judgment of what Armgart is:
My pure delight in her would be but sullied,
If it o'erflowed with mixture of men's praise.
And had she failed, I should have said, " The Pearl
Remains a pearl for me, reflects the light
With the same fitness that first charmed my gaze —
Is worth as fine a setting now as then."

ARMGART (*rising*)

Oh, you are good! But why will you rehearse
The talk of cynics, who with insect eyes
Explore the secrets of the rubbish-heap?
I hate your epigrams and pointed saws
Whose narrow truth is but broad falsity.
Confess your friend was shallow.

GRAF

I confess
Life is not rounded in an epigram,
And saying aught, we leave a world unsaid.
I quoted, merely to shape forth my thought
That high success has terrors when achieved —
Like preternatural spouses whose dire love
Hangs perilous on slight observances:
Whence it were possible that Armgart crowned
Might turn and listen to a pleading voice,
Though Armgart striving in the race was deaf.
You said you dared not think what life had been
Without the stamp of eminence; have you thought
How you will bear the poise of eminence
With dread of sliding? Paint the future out
As an unchecked and glorious career,
'T will grow more strenuous by the very love
You bear to excellence, the very fate
Of human powers, which tread at every step
On possible verges.

ARMGART

I accept the peril.
I choose to walk high with sublimer dread
Rather than crawl in safety. And, besides,
I am an artist as you are a noble:
I ought to bear the burden of my rank.

GRAF

Such parallels, dear Armgart, are but snares
To catch the mind with seeming argument —
Small baits of likeness 'mid disparity.
Men rise the higher as their task is high,
The task being well achieved. A woman's rank
Lies in the fulness of her womanhood:
Therein alone she is royal.

ARMGART

Yes, I know
The oft-taught Gospel: "Woman, thy desire
Shall be that all superlatives on earth
Belong to men, save the one highest kind —
To be a mother. Thou shalt not desire
To do aught best save pure subservience:
Nature has willed it so!" O blessed Nature
Let her be arbitress; she gave me voice
Such as she only gives a woman child,
Best of its kind, gave me ambition too,
That sense transcendent which can taste the joy
Of swaying multitudes, of being adored
For such achievement, needed excellence,
As man's best art must wait for, or be dumb.
Men did not say, when I had sung last night,
"'T was good, nay, wonderful, considering
She is a woman" — and then turn to add,
"Tenor or baritone had sung her songs
Better, of course: she 's but a woman spoiled."
I beg your pardon, Graf, you said it.

GRAF

No!
How should I say it, Armgart? I who own
The magic of your nature-given art
As sweetest effluence of your womanhood
Which, being to my choice the best, must find
The best of utterance. But this I say:
Your fervid youth beguiles you; you mistake
A strain of lyric passion for a life
Which in the spending is a chronicle
With ugly pages. Trust me, Armgart, trust me;
Ambition exquisite as yours which soars
Towards something quintessential you call fame,

Is not robust enough for this gross world
Whose fame is dense with false and foolish breath.
Ardour, a-twin with nice refining thought,
Prepares a double pain. Pain had been saved,
Nay, purer glory reached, had you been throned
As woman only, holding all your art
As attribute to that dear sovereignty —
Concentring your power in home delights
Which penetrate and purify the world.

ARMGART

What! leave the opera with my part ill-sung
While I was warbling in a drawing-room?
Sing in the chimney-corner to inspire
My husband reading news? Let the world hear
My music only in his morning speech
Less stammering than most honourable men's?
No! tell me that my song is poor, my art
The piteous feat of weakness aping strength —
That were fit proem to your argument.
Till then, I am an artist by my birth —
By the same warrant that I am a woman;
Nay, in the added rarer gift I see
Supreme vocation: if a conflict comes,
Perish — no, not the woman, but the joys
Which men make narrow by their narrowness.
Oh, I am happy! The great masters write
For women's voices, and great Music wants me!
I need not crush myself within a mould
Of theory called Nature: I have room
To breathe and grow unstunted.

GRAF

Armgart, hear me.
I meant not that our talk should hurry on

To such collision. Foresight of the ills
Thick shadowing your path, drew on my speech
Beyond intention. True, I came to ask
A great renunciation, but not this
Toward which my words at first perversely strayed,
As if in memory of their earlier suit,
Forgetful . . . . . .
Armgart, do you remember too? the suit
Had but postponement, was not quite disdained —
Was told to wait and learn — what it has learned —
A more submissive speech.

ARMGART (*with some agitation*)

Then it forgot
Its lesson cruelly. As I remember,
'T was not to speak save to the artist crowned,
Nor speak to her of casting off her crown.

GRAF

Nor will it, Armgart. I come not to seek
Any renunciation save the wife's,
Which turns away from other possible love
Future and worthier, to take his love
Who asks the name of husband. He who sought
Armgart obscure, and heard her answer, "Wait" —
May come without suspicion now to seek
Armgart applauded.

ARMGART (*turning toward him*)

Yes, without suspicion
Of aught save what consists with faithfulness
In all expressed intent. Forgive me, Graf —

I am ungrateful to no soul that loves me —
To you most grateful. Yet the best intent
Grasps but a living present which may grow
Like any unfledged bird. You are a noble,
And have a high career; just now you said
'T was higher far than aught a woman seeks
Beyond mere womanhood. You claim to be
More than a husband, but could not rejoice
That I were more than wife. What follows, then?
You choosing me with such persistency
As is but stretched-out rashness, soon must find
Our marriage asks concessions, asks resolve
To share renunciation or demand it.
Either we both renounce a mutual ease,
As in a nation's need both man and wife
Do public services, or one of us
Must yield that something else for which each lives
Besides the other. Men are reasoners:
That premise of superior claims perforce
Urges conclusion — "Armgart, it is you."

GRAF

But if I say I have considered this
With strict prevision, counted all the cost
Which that great good of loving you demands —
Questioned by stores of patience, half resolved
To live resigned without a bliss whose threat
Touched you as well as me — and finally,
With impetus of undivided will
Returned to say, "You shall be free as now;
Only accept the refuge, shelter, guard,
My love will give your freedom" — then your words
Are hard accusal.

ARMGART

Well, I accuse myself.
My love would be accomplice of your will.

GRAF

Again — my will?

ARMGART

Oh, your unspoken will.
Your silent tolerance would torture me,
And on that rack I should deny the good
I yet believed in.

GRAF

Then I am the man
Whom you would love?

ARMGART

Whom I refuse to love!
No; I will live alone and pour my pain
With passion into music, where it turns
To what is best within my better self.
I will not take for husband one who deems
The thing my soul acknowledges as good —
The thing I hold worth striving, suffering for,
To be a thing dispensed with easily
Or else the idol of a mind infirm.

GRAF

Armgart, you are ungenerous; you strain
My thought beyond its mark. Our difference
Lies not so deep as love — as union
Through a mysterious fitness that transcends
Formal agreement.

ARMGART

It lies deep enough
To chafe the union. If many a man
Refrains, degraded, from the utmost right,
Because the pleadings of his wife's small fears
Are little serpents biting at his heel —
How shall a woman keep her steadfastness
Beneath a frost within her husband's eyes
Where coldness scorches? Graf, it is your sorrow
That you love Armgart. Nay, it is her sorrow
That she may not love you.

GRAF

Woman, it seems,
Has enviable power to love or not
According to her will.

ARMGART

She has the will —
I have — who am one woman — not to take
Disloyal pledges that divide her will.
The man who marries me must wed my Art —
Honour and cherish it, not tolerate.

GRAF

The man is yet to come whose theory
Will weigh as naught with you against his love.

ARMGART

Whose theory will plead beside his love.

GRAF

Himself a singer, then? who knows no life
Out of the opera books, where tenor parts
Are found to suit him?

ARMGART

You are bitter, Graf.
Forgive me; seek the woman you deserve,
All grace, all goodness, who has not yet found
A meaning in her life, nor any end
Beyond fulfilling yours. The type abounds.

GRAF

And happily, for the world.

ARMGART

Yes, happily.
Let it excuse me that my kind is rare:
Commonness is its own security.

GRAF

Armgart, I would with all my soul I knew
The man so rare that he could make your life
As woman sweet to you, as artist safe.

ARMGART

Oh, I can live unmated, but not live
Without the bliss of singing to the world,
And feeling all my world respond to me.

GRAF

May it be lasting. Then, we two must part?

ARMGART

I thank you from my heart for all. Farewell!

SCENE III

A YEAR LATER

The same salon. WALPURGA *is standing looking toward the window with an air of uneasiness.* DOCTOR GRAHN.

DOCTOR

Where is my patient, Fräulein?

WALPURGA

Fled! escaped!
Gone to rehearsal. Is it dangerous?

DOCTOR

No, no; her throat is cured. I only came
To hear her try her voice. Had she yet sung?

WALPURGA

No; she had meant to wait for you. She said,
"The Doctor has a right to my first song."
Her gratitude was full of little plans,
But all were swept away like gathered flowers
By sudden storm. She saw this opera bill —
It was a wasp to sting her: she turned pale,
Snatched up her hat and muffler, said in haste,
"I go to Leo — to rehearsal — none
Shall sing Fidelio to-night but me!"
Then rushed down-stairs.

DOCTOR (*looking at his watch*)

And this, not long ago?

WALPURGA

Barely an hour.

DOCTOR

I will come again,
Returning from Charlottenburg at one.

WALPURGA

Doctor, I feel a strange presentiment.
Are you quite easy?

DOCTOR

She can take no harm.
'T was time for her to sing: her throat is well,
It was a fierce attack, and dangerous;
I had to use strong remedies, but — well!
At one, dear Fräulein, we shall meet again.

SCENE IV

TWO HOURS LATER

WALPURGA *starts up, looking toward the door.* ARMGART *enters, followed by* LEO. *She throws herself on a chair which stands with its back toward the door, speechless, not seeming to see anything.* WALPURGA *casts a questioning terrified look at* LEO. *He shrugs his shoulders, and lifts up his hands behind* ARMGART, *who sits like a helpless image, while* WALPURGA *takes off her hat and mantle.*

WALPURGA

Armgart, dear Armgart (*kneeling and taking her hands*), only speak to me,

Your poor Walpurga. Oh, your hands are cold.
Clasp mine, and warm them! I will kiss them
warm.

(ARMGART *looks at her an instant, then draws away her hands, and, turning aside, buries her face against the back of the chair,* WALPURGA *rising and standing near.* DOCTOR GRAHN *enters.*)

DOCTOR

News! stirring news to-day! wonders come thick.

ARMGART (*starting up at the first sound of his voice, and speaking vehemently*)

Yes, thick, thick, thick! and you have murdered it!
Murdered my voice — poisoned the soul in me,
And kept me living.
You never told me that your cruel cures
Were clogging films — a mouldy, dead'ning
blight —
A lava-mud to crust and bury me,
Yet hold me living in a deep, deep tomb,
Crying unheard forever! Oh, your cures
Are devil's triumphs, you can rob, maim, slay,
And keep a hell on the other side your cure
Where you can see your victim quivering
Between the teeth of torture — see a soul
Made keen by loss — all anguish with a good
Once known and gone!
(*Turns and sinks back on her chair.*)
O misery, misery!
You might have killed me, might have let me sleep
After my happy day and wake — not here!
In some new unremembered world — not here,
Where all is faded, flat — a feast broke off —

Banners all meaningless — exulting words
Dull, dull — a drum that lingers in the air
Beating to melody which no man hears.

DOCTOR (*after a moment's silence*)

A sudden check has shaken you, poor child!
All things seem livid, tottering to your sense,
From inward tumult. Stricken by a threat
You see your terrors only. Tell me, Leo:
'T is not such utter loss.

(LEO, *with a shrug, goes quietly out.*)

The freshest bloom
Merely, has left the fruit; the fruit itself . . . .

ARMGART

Is ruined, withered, is a thing to hide
Away from scorn or pity. Oh, you stand
And look compassionate now, but when Death came
With mercy in his hands, you hindered him.
I did not choose to live and have your pity.
You never told me, never gave me choice
To die a singer, lightning-struck, unmaimed,
Or live what you would make me with your cures —
A self accursed with consciousness of change,
A mind that lives in naught but members lopped,
A power turned to pain — as meaningless
As letters fallen asunder that once made
A hymn of rapture. Oh, I had meaning once
Like day and sweetest air. What am I now?
The millionth woman in superfluous herds.
Why should I be, do, think. 'T is thistle-seed,
That grows and grows to feed the rubbish-heap.
Leave me alone!

DOCTOR

Well, I will come again;
Send for me when you will, though but to rate me.
That is medicinal — a letting blood.

ARMGART

Oh, there is one physician, only one,
Who cures and never spoils. Him I shall send for;
He comes readily.

DOCTOR *to* WALPURGA

One word, dear Fräulein.

SCENE V

ARMGART, WALPURGA

ARMGART

Walpurga, have you walked this morning?

WALPURGA

No.

ARMGART

Go, then, and walk; I wish to be alone.

WALPURGA

I will not leave you.

ARMGART

Will not at my wish?

WALPURGA

Will not, because you wish it. Say no more,
But take this draught.

ARMGART

The Doctor gave it you?
It is an anodyne. Put it away.
He cured me of my voice, and now he wants
To cure me of my vision and resolve —
Drug me to sleep that I may wake again
Without a purpose, abject as the rest
To bear the yoke of life. He shall not cheat me
Of that fresh strength which anguish gives the soul,
The inspiration of revolt, ere rage
Slackens to faltering. Now I see the truth.

WALPURGA (*setting down the glass*)

Then you must see a future in your reach,
With happiness enough to make a dower
For two of modest claims.

ARMGART

Oh, you intone
That chant of consolation wherewith ease
Makes itself easier in the sight of pain.

WALPURGA

No; I would not console you, but rebuke.

ARMGART

That is more bearable. Forgive me, dear.
Say what you will. But now I want to write.
(*She rises and moves toward a table.*)

WALPURGA

I say then, you are simply fevered, mad;
You cry aloud at horrors that would vanish
If you would change the light, throw into shade
The loss you aggrandize, and let day fall
On good remaining, nay, on good refused
Which may be gain now. Did you not reject
A woman's lot more brilliant, as some held,
Than any singer's? It may still be yours.
Graf Dornberg loved you well.

ARMGART

Not me, not me.
He loved one well who was like me in all
Save in a voice which made that All unlike
As diamond is to charcoal. Oh, a man's love!
Think you he loves a woman's inner self
Aching with loss of loveliness? — as mothers
Cleave to the palpitating pain that dwells
Within their misformed offspring?

WALPURGA

But the Graf
Chose you as simple Armgart — had preferred
That you should never seek for any fame
But such as matrons have who rear great sons.
And therefore you rejected him; but now —

ARMGART

Ay, now — now he would see me as I am,
(*She takes up a hand-mirror.*)
Russet and songless as a missel-thrush.
An ordinary girl — a plain brown girl,
Who, if some meaning flash from out her words,

Shocks as a disproportioned thing — a Will
That, like an arm astretch and broken off,
Has naught to hurl — the torso of a soul.
I sang him into love of me: my song
Was consecration, lifted me apart
From the crowd chiselled like me, sister forms,
But empty of divineness. Nay, my charm
Was half that I could win fame yet renounce,
A wife with glory possible absorbed
Into her husband's actual.

WALPURGA

For shame!
Armgart, you slander him. What would you say
If now he came to you and asked again
That you would be his wife?

ARMGART

No, and thrice no!
It would be pitying constancy, not love,
That brought him to me now. I will not be
A pensioner in marriage. Sacraments
Are not to feed the paupers of the world.
If he were generous — I am generous too.

ARMGART

Proud, Armgart, but not generous.

ARMGART

Say no more.
He will not know until —

WALPURGA

He knows already.

ARMGART (*quickly*)

Is he come back?

WALPURGA

Yes, and will soon be here.
The Doctor had twice seen him and would go
From hence again to see him.

ARMGART

Well, he knows.
It is all one.

WALPURGA

What if he were outside?
I hear a footstep in the ante-room.

ARMGART (*raising herself and assuming calmness*)

Why let him come, of course. I shall behave
Like what I am, a common personage
Who looks for nothing but civility.
I shall not play the fallen heroine,
Assume a tragic part and throw out cues
For a beseeching lover.

WALPURGA

Some one raps.
(*Goes to the door.*)
A letter — from the Graf.

ARMGART

Then open it.
(WALPURGA *still offers it.*)
Nay, my head swims. Read it. I cannot see.
(WALPURGA *opens it, reads and pauses.*)
Read it. Have done! No matter what it is.

WALPURGA (*reads in a low, hesitating voice*)

"I am deeply moved — my heart is rent, to hear of your illness and its cruel result, just now communicated to me by Dr. Grahn. But surely it is possible that this result may not be permanent. For youth such as yours, Time may hold in store something more than resignation: who shall say that it does not hold renewal? I have not dared to ask admission to you in the hours of a recent shock, but I cannot depart on a long mission without tendering my sympathy and my farewell. I start this evening for the Caucasus, and thence I proceed to India, where I am intrusted by the Government with business which may be of long duration."

(WALPURGA *sits down dejectedly.*)

ARMGART (*after a slight shudder, bitterly*)

The Graf has much discretion. I am glad.
He spares us both a pain, not seeing me.
What I like least is that consoling hope —
That empty cup, so neatly ciphered "Time,"
Handed me as a cordial for despair.
(*Slowly and dreamily*) Time — what a word to fling as charity!
Bland neutral words for slow, dull-beating pain —
Days, months, and years! — If I would wait for them.

(*She takes up her hat and puts it on, then wraps her mantle round her.* WALPURGA *leaves the room.*)

Why, this is but beginning. (WALPURGA *re-enters.*) Kiss me, dear.
I am going now — alone — out — for a walk.
Say you will never wound me any more

With such cajolery as nurses use
To patients amorous of a crippled life.
Flatter the blind: I see.

WALPURGA

Well, I was wrong.
In haste to soothe, I snatched at flickers merely.
Believe me, I will flatter you no more.

ARMGART

Bear witness, I am calm. I read my lot
As soberly as if it were a tale
Writ by a creeping feuilletonist and called
"The Woman's Lot: a Tale of Everyday:"
A middling woman's, to impress the world
With high superfluousness; her thoughts a crop
Of chickweed errors or of pot-herb facts,
Smiled at like some child's drawing on a slate.
"Genteel?" "Oh yes, gives lessons; not so good
As any man's would be, but cheaper far."
"Pretty?" "No; yet she makes a figure fit
For good society. Poor thing, she sews
Both late and early, turns and alters all
To suit the changing mode. Some widower
Might do well, marrying her; but in these days! . . .
Well, she can somewhat eke her narrow gains
By writing, just to furnish her with gloves
And droschkies in the rain. They print her things
Often for charity." — Oh, a dog's life!
A harnessed dog's, that draws a little cart
Voted a nuisance! I am going now.

WALPURGA

Not now, the door is locked.

ARMGART

Give me the key!

WALPURGA

Locked on the outside. Gretchen has the key:
She is gone on errands.

ARMGART

What, you dare to keep me
Your prisoner?

WALPURGA

And have I not been yours?
Your wish has been a bolt to keep me in.
Perhaps that middling woman whom you paint
With far-off scorn . . .

ARMGART

I paint what I must be!
What is my soul to me without the voice
That gave it freedom? — gave it one grand touch
And made it nobly human? — Prisoned now,
Prisoned in all the petty mimicries
Called woman's knowledge, that will fit the world
As doll-clothes fit a man. I can do naught
Better than what a million women do —
Must drudge among the crowd and feel my life
Beating upon the world without response,
Beating with passion through an insect's horn
That moves a millet-seed laboriously.
If I *would* do it!

WALPURGA (*coldly*)

And why should you not?

ARMGART (*turning quickly*)

Because Heaven made me royal — wrought me
out
With subtle finish toward pre-eminence,
Made every channel of my soul converge
To one high function, and then flung me down,
That breaking I might turn to subtlest pain.
An inborn passion gives a rebel's right:
I would rebel and die in twenty worlds
Sooner than bear the yoke of thwarted life,
Each keenest sense turned into keen distaste,
Hunger not satisfied but kept alive
Breathing in languor half a century.
All the world now is but a rack of threads
To twist and dwarf me into pettiness
And basely feigned content, the placid mask
Of women's misery.

WALPURGA (*indignantly*)

Ay, such a mask
As the few born like you to easy joy,
Cradled in privilege, take for natural
On all the lowly faces that must look
Upward to you! What revelation now
Shows you the mask or gives presentiment
Of sadness hidden? You who every day
These five years saw me limp to wait on you,
And thought the order perfect which gave *me,*
The girl without pretension to be aught,
A splendid cousin for my happiness:
To watch the night through when her brain was
fired
With too much gladness — listen, always listen
To what *she* felt, who having power had right
To feel exorbitantly, and submerge

The souls around her with the poured-out flood
Of what must be ere she was satisfied!
That was feigned patience, was it? Why not love,
Love nurtured even with that strength of self
Which found no room save in another's life?
Oh, such as I know joy by negatives,
And all their deepest passion is a pang
Till they accept their pauper's heritage,
And meekly live from out the general store
Of joy they were born stripped of. I accept —
Nay, now would sooner choose it than the wealth
Of natures you call royal, who can live
In mere mock knowledge of their fellows' woe,
Thinking their smiles may heal it.

ARMGART (*tremulously*)

Nay, Walpurga,
I did not make a palace of my joy
To shut the world's truth from me. All my good
Was that I touched the world and made a part
In the world's dower of beauty, strength, and bliss:
It was the glimpse of consciousness divine
Which pours out day and sees the day is good.
Now I am fallen dark; I sit in gloom,
Remembering bitterly. Yet you speak truth;
I wearied you, it seems; took all your help
As cushioned nobles use a weary serf,
Not looking at his face.

WALPURGA

Oh, I but stand
As a small symbol for the mighty sum
Of claims unpaid to needy myriads;
I think you never set your loss beside

That mighty deficit. Is your work gone —
The prouder queenly work that paid itself
And yet was overpaid with men's applause?
Are you no longer chartered, privileged,
But sunk to simple woman's penury,
To ruthless Nature's chary average —
Where is the rebel's right for you alone?
Noble rebellion lifts a common load;
But what is he who flings his own load off
And leaves his fellows toiling? Rebel's right?
Say rather, the deserter's. Oh, you smiled
From your clear height on all the million lots
Which yet you brand as abject.

ARMGART

I was blind
With too much happiness: true vision comes
Only, it seems, with sorrow. Were there one
This moment near me, suffering what I feel,
And needing me for comfort in her pang —
Then it were worth the while to live; not else.

WALPURGA

One — near you — why, they throng! you hardly stir
But your act touches them. We touch afar.
For did not swarthy slaves of yesterday
Leap in their bondage at the Hebrews' flight,
Which touched them through the thrice millennial dark?
But you can find the sufferer you need
With touch less subtle.

ARMGART

Who has need of me?

WALPURGA

Love finds the need it fills. But you are hard.

ARMGART

Is it not you, Walpurga, who are hard?
You humoured all my wishes till to-day,
When fate has blighted me.

WALPURGA

You would not hear
The "chant of consolation:" words of hope
Only imbittered you. Then hear the truth —
A lame girl's truth, whom no one ever praised
For being cheerful. "It is well," they said:
"Were she cross-grained she could not be endured."
A word of truth from her had startled you;
But you — you claimed the universe; naught less
Than all existence working in sure tracks
Toward your supremacy. The wheels might scathe
A myriad destinies — nay, must perforce;
But yours they must keep clear of; just for you
The seething atoms through the firmament
Must bear a human heart — which you had not!
For what is it to you that women, men,
Plod, faint, are weary, and espouse despair
Of aught but fellowship? Save that you spurn
To be among them? Now, then, you are lame —
Maimed, as you said, and levelled with the crowd:
Call it new birth — birth from that monstrous Self
Which, smiling down upon a race oppressed,
Says, "All is good, for I am throned at ease."
Dear Armgart — nay, you tremble — I am cruel.

ARMGART

Oh no! hark! Some one knocks. Come in! — come in!

(*Enter* LEO.)

LEO

See, Gretchen let me in. I could not rest
Longer away from you.

ARMGART

Sit down, dear Leo.
Walpurga, I would speak with him alone.

(WALPURGA *goes out.*)

LEO (*hesitatingly*)

You mean to walk?

ARMGART

No, I shall stay within.

(*She takes off her hat and mantle, and sits down immediately. After a pause, speaking in a subdued tone to* LEO.)

How old are you?

LEO

Threescore and five.

ARMGART

That 's old.
I never thought till now how you have lived.
They hardly ever play your music?

LEO (*raising his eyebrows and throwing out his lip*)

No!
Schubert too wrote for silence: half his work

Lay like a frozen Rhine till summers came
That warmed the grass above him. Even so!
His music lives now with a mighty youth.

ARMGART

Do you think yours will live when you are dead?

LEO

Pfui! The time was, I drank that home-brewed wine
And found it heady, while my blood was young:
Now it scarce warms me. Tipple it as I may,
I am sober still, and say: "My old friend Leo,
Much grain is wasted in the world and rots;
Why not thy handful?"

ARMGART

Strange! since I have known you
Till now I never wondered how you lived.
When I sang well — that was your jubilee.
But you were old already.

LEO

Yes, child, yes:
Youth thinks itself the goal of each old life;
Age has but travelled from a far-off time
Just to be ready for youth's service. Well!
It was my chief delight to perfect you.

ARMGART

Good Leo! You have lived on little joys.
But your delight in me is crushed forever.
Your pains, where are they now? They shaped intent
Which action frustrates; shaped an inward sense
Which is but keen despair, the agony
Of highest vision in the lowest pit.

LEO

Nay, nay, I have a thought: keep to the stage,
To drama without song; for you can act —
Who knows how well, when all the soul is poured
Into that sluice alone.

ARMGART

I know, and you:
The second or third best in tragedies
That cease to touch the fibre of the time.
No; song is gone, but nature's other gift,
Self-judgment, is not gone. Song was my speech,
And with its impulse only, action came:
Song was the battle's onset, when cool purpose
Glows into rage, becomes a warring god
And moves the limbs with miracle. But now —
Oh, I should stand hemmed in with thoughts and rules —
Say, "This way passion acts," yet never feel
The might of passion. How should I declaim?
As monsters write with feet instead of hands.
I will not feed on doing great tasks ill,
Dull the world's sense with mediocrity,
And live by trash that smothers excellence.
One gift I had that ranked me with the best —
The secret of my frame — and that is gone.
For all life now I am a broken thing.
But silence there! Good Leo, advise me now.
I would take humble work and do it well —
Teach music, singing — what I can — not here,
But in some smaller town where I may bring
The method you have taught me, pass your gift
To others who can use it for delight.
You think I can do that?

(*She pauses with a sob in her voice.*)

LEO

Yes, yes, dear child!
And it were well, perhaps, to change the place —
Begin afresh as I did when I left
Vienna with a heart half broken.

ARMGART (*roused by surprise*)

You?

LEO

Well, it is long ago. But I had lost —
No matter! We must bury our dead joys
And live above them with a living world.
But whither, think you, you would like to go?

ARMGART

To Freiburg.

LEO

In the Breisgau? And why there?
It is too small.

ARMGART

Walpurga was born there,
And loves the place. She quitted it for me
These five years past. Now I will take her there.
Dear Leo, I will bury my dead joy.

LEO

Mothers do so, bereaved; then learn to love
Another's living child.

ARMGART

Oh, it is hard
To take the little corpse, and lay it low.
And say, " None misses it but me."

She sings . . .
I mean Paulina sings Fidelio,
And they will welcome her to-night.

LEO

Well, well,
'T is better that our griefs should not spread far.

1870

HOW LISA LOVED THE KING

SIX hundred years ago, in Dante's time,
Before his cheek was furrowed by deep rhyme —
When Europe, fed afresh from Eastern story,
Was like a garden tangled with the glory
Of flowers hand-planted and of flowers air-sown,
Climbing and trailing, budding and full-blown,
Where purple bells are tossed amid pink stars,
And springing blades, green troops in innocent wars,
Crowd every shady spot of teeming earth,
Making invisible motion visible birth —
Six hundred years ago, Palermo town
Kept holiday. A deed of great renown,
A high revenge, had freed it from the yoke
Of hated Frenchmen, and from Calpe's rock
To where Bosporus caught the earlier sun,
'T was told that Pedro, King of Aragon,
Was welcomed master of all Sicily,
A royal knight, supreme as kings should be
In strength and gentleness that make high chivalry.

Spain was the favourite home of knightly grace,
Where generous men rode steeds of generous race;
Both Spanish, yet half Arab, both inspired
By mutual spirit, that each motion fired
With beauteous response, like minstrelsy
Afresh fulfilling fresh expectancy.
So when Palermo made high festival,
The joy of matrons and of maidens all

Was the mock terror of the tournament,
Where safety, with the glimpse of danger blent,
Took exaltation as from epic song,
Which greatly tells the pains that to great life belong.
And in all eyes King Pedro was the king
Of cavaliers: as in a full-gemmed ring
The largest ruby, or as that bright star
Whose shining shows us where the Hyads are.
His the best jennet, and he sat it best;
His weapon, whether tilting or in rest,
Was worthiest watching, and his face once seen
Gave to the promise of his royal mien
Such rich fulfilment as the opened eyes
Of a loved sleeper, or the long-watched rise
Of vernal day, whose joy o'er stream and meadow flies.

But of the maiden forms that thick enwreathed
The broad piazza and sweet witchery breathed,
With innocent faces budding all arow
From balconies and windows high and low,
Who was it felt the deep mysterious glow,
The impregnation with supernal fire
Of young ideal love — transformed desire,
Whose passion is but worship of that Best
Taught by the many-mingled creed of each young breast?
'T was gentle Lisa, of no noble line,
Child of Bernardo, a rich Florentine,
Who from his merchant-city hither came
To trade in drugs; yet kept an honest fame,
And had the virtue not to try and sell
Drugs that had none. He loved his riches well,
But loved them chiefly for his Lisa's sake,
Whom with a father's care he sought to make

The bride of some true honourable man:
Of Perdicone (so the rumour ran),
Whose birth was higher than his fortunes were;
For still your trader likes a mixture fair
Of blood that hurries to some higher strain
Than reckoning money's loss and money's gain.
And of such mixture good may surely come:
Lords' scions so may learn to cast a sum,
A trader's grandson bear a well-set head,
And have less conscious manners, better bred;
Nor, when he tries to be polite, be rude instead.

'T was Perdicone's friends made overtures
To good Bernardo: so one dame assures
Her neighbour dame who notices the youth
Fixing his eyes on Lisa; and in truth
Eyes that could see her on this summer day
Might find it hard to turn another way.
She had a pensive beauty, yet not sad;
Rather, like minor cadences that glad
The hearts of little birds amid spring boughs;
And oft the trumpet or the joust would rouse
Pulses that gave her cheek a finer glow,
Parting her lips that seemed a mimic bow
By chiselling Love for play in coral wrought,
Then quickened by him with the passionate thought,
The soul that trembled in the lustrous night
Of slow long eyes. Her body was so slight,
It seemed she could have floated in the sky,
And with the angelic choir made symphony;
But in her cheek's rich tinge, and in the dark
Of darkest hair and eyes, she bore a mark
Of kinship to her generous mother earth,
The fervid land that gives the plumy palm-trees birth.

She saw not Perdicone; her young mind
Dreamed not that any man had ever pined
For such a little simple maid as she:
She had but dreamed how heavenly it would be
To love some hero noble, beauteous, great,
Who would live stories worthy to narrate,
Like Roland, or the warriors of Troy,
The Cid, or Amadis, or that fair boy
Who conquered everything beneath the sun,
And somehow, some time, died at Babylon
Fighting the Moors. For heroes all were good
And fair as that archangel who withstood
The Evil One, the author of all wrong —
That Evil One who made the French so strong;
And now the flower of heroes must be he
Who drove those tyrants from dear Sicily,
So that her maids might walk to vespers tranquilly.

Young Lisa saw this hero in the king,
And as wood lilies that sweet odours bring
Might dream the light that opes their modest eyne
Was lily-odoured — and as rites divine,
Round turf-laid altars, or 'neath roofs of stone,
Draw sanctity from out the heart alone
That loves and worships, so the miniature
Perplexed of her soul's world, all virgin pure,
Filled with heroic virtues that bright form,
Raona's royalty, the finished norm
Of horsemanship — the half of chivalry:
For how could generous men avengers be,
Save as God's messengers on coursers fleet? —
These, scouring earth, made Spain with Syria meet
In one self world where the same right had sway,
And good must grow as grew the blessed day.
No more, great Love his essence had endued
With Pedro's form, and entering subdued

The soul of Lisa, fervid and intense,
Proud in its choice of proud obedience
To hardship glorified by perfect reverence.

Sweet Lisa homeward carried that dire guest,
And in her chamber through the hours of rest
The darkness was alight for her with sheen
Of arms, and pluméd helm, and right between
Their commoner gloss, like the pure living spring
'Twixt porphyry lips, or living bird's bright wing
'Twixt golden wires, the glances of the king
Flashed on her soul, and waked vibrations there
Of known delights love-mixed to new and rare:
The impalpable dream was turned to breathing flesh,
Chill thought of summer to the warm close mesh
Of sunbeams held between the citron-leaves,
Clothing her life of life. Oh, she believes
That she could be content if he but knew
(Her poor small self could claim no other due)
How Lisa's lowly love had highest reach
Of wingéd passion, whereto wingéd speech
Would be scorched remnants left by mountain flame.
Though, had she such lame message, were it blame
To tell what greatness dwelt in her, what rank
She held in loving? Modest maidens shrank
From telling love that fed on selfish hope;
But love, as hopeless as the shattering song
Wailed for loved beings who have joined the throng
Of mighty dead ones. . . . Nay, but she was weak —
Knew only prayers and ballads — could not speak

With eloquence save what dumb creatures have,
That with small cries and touches small boons crave.
She watched all day that she might see him pass
With knights and ladies; but she said, "Alas!
Though he should see me, it were all as one
He saw a pigeon sitting on the stone
Of wall or balcony: some coloured spot
His eye just sees, his mind regardeth not.
I have no music-touch that could bring nigh
My love to his soul's hearing. I shall die,
And he will never know who Lisa was, —
The trader's child, whose soaring spirit rose
As hedge-born aloe-flowers that rarest years disclose.

"For were I now a fair deep-breasted queen
A-horseback, with blond hair, and tunic green
Gold-bordered, like Costanza, I should need
No change within to make me queenly there;
For they the royal-hearted women are
Who nobly love the noblest, yet have grace
For needy suffering lives in lowliest place,
Carrying a choicer sunlight in their smile,
The heavenliest ray that pitieth the vile.
My love is such, it cannot choose but soar
Up to the highest; yet forevermore,
Though I were happy, throned beside the king,
I should be tender to each little thing
With hurt warm breast, that had no speech to tell
Its inward pang, and I would soothe it well
With tender touch and with a low soft moan
For company: my dumb love-pang is lone,
Prisoned as topaz-beam within a rough-garbed stone."

So, inward-wailing, Lisa passed her days.
Each night the August moon with changing phase
Looked broader, harder on her unchanged pain;
Each noon the heat lay heavier again
On her despair; until her body frail
Shrank like the snow that watchers in the vale
See narrowed on the height each summer morn;
While her dark glance burnt larger, more forlorn,
As if the soul within her all on fire
Made of her being one swift funeral pyre.
Father and mother saw with sad dismay
The meaning of their riches melt away:
For without Lisa what would sequins buy?
What wish were left if Lisa were to die?
Through her they cared for summers still to come,
Else they would be as ghosts without a home
In any flesh that could feel glad desire.
They pay the best physicians, never tire
Of seeking what will soothe her, promising
That aught she longed for, though it were a thing
Hard to be come at as the Indian snow,
Or roses that on Alpine summits blow —
It should be hers. She answers with low voice,
She longs for death alone — death is her choice;
Death is the King who never did think scorn,
But rescues every meanest soul to sorrow born.

Yet one day, as they bent above her bed
And watched her in brief sleep, her drooping head
Turned gently, as the thirsty flowers that feel
Some moist revival through their petals steal,
And little flutterings of her lids and lips
Told of such dreamy joy as sometimes dips
A skyey shadow in the mind's poor pool,
She oped her eyes, and turned their dark gems full

Upon her father, as in utterance dumb
Of some new prayer that in her sleep had come.
"What is it, Lisa?" "Father, I would see
Minuccio, the great singer; bring him me."
For always, night and day, her unstilled thought,
Wandering all o'er its little world, had sought
How she could reach, by some soft pleading touch,
King Pedro's soul, that she who loved so much
Dying, might have a place within his mind —
A little grave which he would sometimes find
And plant some flower on it — some thought, some memory kind,
Till in her dream she saw Minuccio
Touching his viola, and chanting low
A strain that, falling on her brokenly,
Seemed blossoms lightly blown from off a tree,
Each burdened with a word that was a scent —
Raona, Lisa, love, death, tournament;
Then in her dreams she said, "He sings of me —
Might be my messenger; ah, now I see
The king is listening — " Then she awoke,
And, missing her dear dream, that new-born longing spoke.

She longed for music: that was natural;
Physicians said it was medicinal;
The humours might be schooled by true consent
Of a fine tenor and fine instrument;
In brief, good music, mixed with doctor's stuff,
Apollo with Asklepios — enough!
Minuccio, entreated, gladly came.
(He was a singer of most gentle fame —
A noble, kindly spirit, not elate
That he was famous, but the song was great —
Would sing as finely to this suffering child

As at the court where princes on him smiled.)
Gently he entered and sat down by her,
Asking what sort of strain she would prefer —
The voice alone, or voice with viol wed;
Then, when she chose the last, he preluded
With magic hand, that summoned from the strings
Aerial spirits, rare yet vibrant wings
That fanned the pulses of his listener,
And waked each sleeping sense with blissful stir.
Her cheek already showed a slow faint blush,
But soon the voice, in pure full liquid rush,
Made all the passion, that till now she felt,
Seem but cool waters that in warmer melt.
Finished the song, she prayed to be alone
With kind Minuccio; for her faith had grown
To trust him as if missioned like a priest
With some high grace, that when his singing ceased
Still made him wiser, more magnanimous
Than common men who had no genius.

So laying her small hand within his palm,
She told him how that secret glorious harm
Of loftiest loving had befallen her;
That death, her only hope, most bitter were,
If when she died her love must perish too,
As songs unsung and thoughts unspoken do,
Which else might live within another breast.
She said, " Minuccio, the grave were rest,
If I were sure, that lying cold and lone,
My love, my best of life, had safely flown
And nestled in the bosom of the king;
See, 't is a small weak bird, with unfledged wing.
But you will carry it for me secretly,
And bear it to the king, then come to me

And tell me it is safe, and I shall go
Content, knowing that he I love my love doth know."

Then she wept silently, but each large tear
Made pleading music to the inward ear
Of good Minuccio. "Lisa, trust in me,"
He said, and kissed her fingers loyally;
"It is sweet law to me to do your will,
And ere the sun his round shall thrice fulfil,
I hope to bring you news of such rare skill
As amulets have, that aches in trusting bosoms still."
He needed not to pause and first devise
How he should tell the king; for in nowise
Were such love-message worthily bested
Save in fine verse by music renderéd.
He sought a poet-friend, a Siennese,
And "Mico, mine," he said, "full oft to please
Thy whim of sadness I have sung thee strains
To make thee weep in verse: now pay my pains,
And write me a canzón divinely sad,
Sinlessly passionate and meekly mad
With young despair, speaking a maiden's heart
Of fifteen summers, who would fain depart
From ripening life's new-urgent mystery —
Love-choice of one too high her love to be —
But cannot yield her breath till she has poured
Her strength away in this hot-bleeding word
Telling the secret of her soul to her soul's lord."

Said Mico, "Nay, that thought is poesy,
I need but listen as it sings to me.
Come thou again to-morrow." The third day,
When linkéd notes had perfected the lay,

Minuccio had his summons to the court
To make, as he was wont, the moments short
Of ceremonious dinner to the king.
This was the time when he had meant to bring
Melodious message of young Lisa's love:
He waited till the air had ceased to move
To ringing silver, till Falernian wine
Made quickened sense with quietude combine,
And then with passionate descant made each ear
incline.

Love, thou didst see me, light as morning's breath,
Roaming a garden in a joyous error,
Laughing at chases vain, a happy child,
Till of thy countenance the alluring terror
In majesty from out the blossoms smiled,
From out their life seeming a beauteous Death.

O Love, who so didst choose me for thine own,
Taking this little isle to thy great sway,
See now, it is the honour of thy throne
That what thou gavest perish not away,
Nor leave some sweet remembrance to atone
By life that will be for the brief life gone:
Hear, ere the shroud o'er these frail limbs be
thrown
Since every king is vassal unto thee,
My heart's lord needs must listen loyally —
Oh tell him I am waiting for my Death!

Tell him, for that he hath such royal power
'T were hard for him to think how small a
thing,
How slight a sign, would make a wealthy dower
For one like me, the bride of that pale king
Whose bed is mine at some swift-nearing hour.

Go to my lord, and to his memory bring
That happy birthday of my sorrowing
When his large glance made meaner gazers glad,
Entering the bannered lists: 't was then I had
The wound that laid me in the arms of Death.

Tell him, O Love, I am a lowly maid,
No more than any little knot of thyme
That he with careless foot may often tread;
Yet lowest fragrance oft will mount sublime
And cleave to things most high and hallowéd,
As doth the fragrance of my life's springtime,
My lowly love, that soaring seeks to climb
Within his thought, and make a gentle bliss,
More blissful than if mine, in being his:
So shall I live in him and rest in Death.

The strain was new. It seemed a pleading cry,
And yet a rounded perfect melody,
Making grief beauteous as the tear-filled eyes
Of little child at little miseries.
Trembling at first, then swelling as it rose,
Like rising light that broad and broader grows,
It filled the hall, and so possessed the air
That not one breathing soul was present there,
Though dullest, slowest, but was quivering
In music's grasp, and forced to hear her sing.
But most such sweet compulsion took the mood
Of Pedro (tired of doing what he would).
Whether the words which that strange meaning bore
Were but the poet's feigning or aught more,
Was bounden question, since their aim must be
At some imagined or true royalty.
He called Minuccio and bade him tell

What poet of the day had writ so well;
For though they came behind all former rhymes,
The verses were not bad for these poor times.
" Monsignor, they are only three days old,"
Minuccio said; " but it must not be told
How this song grew, save to your royal ear."
Eager, the king withdrew where none was near,
And gave close audience to Minuccio,
Who meetly told that love-tale meet to know.
The king had features pliant to confess
The presence of a manly tenderness —
Son, father, brother, lover, blent in one,
In fine harmonic exaltation —
The spirit of religious chivalry.
He listened, and Minuccio could see
The tender, generous admiration spread
O'er all his face, and glorify his head
With royalty that would have kept its rank
Though his brocaded robes to tatters shrank.
He answered without pause, " So sweet a maid,
In nature's own insignia arrayed,
Though she were come of unmixed trading blood
That sold and bartered ever since the Flood,
Would have the self-contained and single worth
Of radiant jewels born in darksome earth.
Raona were a shame to Sicily,
Letting such love and tears unhonoured be:
Hasten, Minuccio, tell her that the king
To-day will surely visit her when vespers ring."

Joyful, Minuccio bore the joyous word,
And told at full, while none but Lisa heard,
How each thing had befallen, sang the song,
And like a patient nurse who would prolong
All means of soothing, dwelt upon each tone,
Each look, with which the mighty Aragon

Marked the high worth his royal heart assigned
To that dear place he held in Lisa's mind.
She listened till the draughts of pure content
Through all her limbs like some new being went —
Life, not recovered, but untried before,
From out the growing world's unmeasured store
Of fuller, better, more divinely mixed.
'T was glad reverse: she had so firmly fixed
To die, already seemed to fall a veil
Shrouding the inner glow from light of senses pale.
Her parents wondering see her half arise —
Wondering, rejoicing, see her long dark eyes
Brimful with clearness, not of 'scaping tears,
But of some light ethereal that enspheres
Their orbs with calm, some vision newly learnt
Where strangest fires erewhile had blindly burnt.
She asked to have her soft white robe and band
And coral ornaments, and with her hand
She gave her locks' dark length a backward fall,
Then looked intently in a mirror small,
And feared her face might perhaps displease the king;
" In truth," she said, " I am a tiny thing;
I was too bold to tell what could such visit bring."
Meanwhile the king, revolving in his thought
That virgin passion, was more deeply wrought
To chivalrous pity; and at vesper bell,
With careless mien which hid his purpose well,
Went forth on horseback, and as if by chance
Passing Bernardo's house, he paused to glance
At the fine garden of this wealthy man,
This Tuscan trader turned Palermitan:
But, presently dismounting, chose to walk
Amid the trellises, in gracious talk

With the same trader, deigning even to ask
If he had yet fulfilled the father's task
Of marrying that daughter whose young charms
Himself, betwixt the passages of arms,
Noted admiringly. "Monsignor, no,
She is not married; that were little woe,
Since she has counted barely fifteen years;
But all such hopes of late have turned to fears;
She droops and fades; though for a space quite brief —
Scarce three hours past — she finds some strange relief."
The king avised: "'T were dole to all of us,
The world should lose a maid so beauteous;
Let me now see her; since I am her liege lord,
Her spirits must wage war with death at my strong word."

In such half-serious playfulness, he wends,
With Lisa's father and two chosen friends,
Up to the chamber where she pillowed sits
Watching the open door, that now admits
A presence as much better than her dreams,
As happiness than any longing seems.
The king advanced, and, with a reverent kiss
Upon her hand, said, "Lady, what is this?
You, whose sweet youth should others' solace be,
Pierce all our hearts, languishing piteously.
We pray you, for the love of us, be cheered,
Nor be too reckless of that life, endeared
To us who know your passing worthiness,
And count your blooming life as part of our life's bliss."
Those words, that touch upon her hand from him
Whom her soul worshipped, as far seraphim

Worship the distant glory, brought some shame
Quivering upon her cheek, yet thrilled her frame
With such deep joy she seemed in paradise,
In wondering gladness, and in dumb surprise
That bliss could be so blissful: then she spoke —
"Signor, I was too weak to bear the yoke,
The golden yoke of thoughts too great for me;
That was the ground of my infirmity.
But now, I pray your grace to have belief
That I shall soon be well, nor any more cause grief."

The king alone perceived the covert sense
Of all her words, which made one evidence
With her pure voice and candid loveliness,
That he had lost much honour, honouring less
That message of her passionate distress.
He stayed beside her for a little while
With gentle looks and speech, until a smile
As placid as a ray of early morn
On opening flower-cups o'er her lips was borne.
When he had left her, and the tidings spread
Through all the town how he had visited
The Tuscan trader's daughter, who was sick,
Men said, it was a royal deed and catholic.

And Lisa? she no longer wished for death;
But as a poet, who sweet verses saith
Within his soul, and joys in music there,
Nor seeks another heaven, nor can bear
Disturbing pleasures, so was she content,
Breathing the life of grateful sentiment.
She thought no maid betrothed could be more blest;
For treasure must be valued by the test
Of highest excellence and rarity,

And her dear joy was best as best could be;
There seemed no other crown to her delight
Now the high loved one saw her love aright.
Thus her soul thriving on that exquisite mood,
Spread like the May-time all its beauteous good
O'er the soft bloom of neck, and arms, and cheek,
And strengthened the sweet body, once so weak,
Until she rose and walked, and, like a bird
With sweetly rippling throat, she made her spring joys heard.
The king, when he the happy change had seen,
Trusted the ear of Constance, his fair queen,
With Lisa's innocent secret, and conferred
How they should jointly, by their deed and word,
Honour this maiden's love, which, like the prayer
Of loyal hermits, never thought to share
In what it gave. The queen had that chief grace
Of womanhood, a heart that can embrace
All goodness in another woman's form;
And that same day, ere the sun lay too warm
On southern terraces, a messenger
Informed Bernardo that the royal pair
Would straightway visit him and celebrate
Their gladness at his daughter's happier state,
Which they were fain to see. Soon came the king
On horseback, with his barons, heralding
The advent of the queen in courtly state;
And all, descending at the garden gate,
Streamed with their feathers, velvet, and brocade,
Through the pleached alleys, till they, pausing, made
A lake of splendour 'mid the aloes gray —
When, meekly facing all their proud array,
The white-robed Lisa with her parents stood,
As some white dove before the gorgeous brood

Of dapple-breasted birds born by the Colchian
flood.

The king and queen, by gracious looks and speech,
Encourage her, and thus their courtiers teach
How this fair morning they may courtliest be
By making Lisa pass it happily.
And soon the ladies and the barons all
Draw her by turns, as at a festival
Made for her sake, to easy, gay discourse,
And compliment with looks and smiles enforce;
A joyous hum is heard the gardens round;
Soon there is Spanish dancing and the sound
Of minstrel's song, and autumn fruits are pluckt;
Till mindfully the king and queen conduct
Lisa apart to where a trellised shade
Made pleasant resting. Then King Pedro said —
"Excellent maiden, that rich gift of love
Your heart hath made us, hath a worth above
All royal treasures, nor is fitly met
Save when the grateful memory of deep debt
Lies still behind the outward honours done:
And as a sign that no oblivion
Shall overflood that faithful memory,
We while we live your cavalier will be,
Nor will we ever arm ourselves for fight,
Whether for struggle dire or brief delight
Of warlike feigning, but we first will take
The colours you ordain, and for your sake
Charge the more bravely where your emblem is;
Nor will we ever claim an added bliss
To our sweet thoughts of you save one sole kiss.
But there still rests the outward honour meet
To mark your worthiness, and we entreat
That you will turn your ear to proffered vows
Of one who loves you, and would be your spouse.

We must not wrong yourself and Sicily
By letting all your blooming years pass by
Unmated: you will give the world its due
From beauteous maiden and become a matron
true."

Then Lisa, wrapt in virgin wonderment
At her ambitious love's complete content,
Which left no further good for her to seek
Than love's obedience, said with accent meek —
" Monsignor, I know well that were it known
To all the world how high my love had flown,
There would be few who would not deem me mad,
Or say my mind the falsest image had
Of my condition and your lofty place.
But heaven has seen that for no moment's space
Have I forgotten you to be the king,
Or me myself to be a lowly thing —
A little lark, enamoured of the sky,
That soared to sing, to break its breast, and
die.
But, as you better know than I, the heart
In choosing chooseth not its own desert,
But that great merit which attracteth it;
'T is law, I struggled, but I must submit,
And having seen a worth all worth above,
I loved you, love you, and shall always love;
But that doth mean, my will is ever yours,
Not only when your will my good insures,
But if it wrought me what the world calls harm —
Fire, wounds, would wear from your dear will a
charm.
That you will be my knight is full content,
And for that kiss — I pray, first for the queen's
consent."

Her answer, given with such firm gentleness,
Pleased the queen well, and made her hold no less
Of Lisa's merit than the king had held.
And so, all cloudy threats of grief dispelled,
There was betrothal made that very morn
'Twixt Perdicone, youthful, brave, well-born,
And Lisa, whom he loved; she loving well
The lot that from obedience befell.
The queen a rare betrothal ring on each
Bestowed, and other gems, with gracious speech.
And that no joy might lack, the king, who knew
The youth was poor, gave him rich Ceffalú
And Cataletta, large and fruitful lands —
Adding much promise when he joined their hands.
At last he said to Lisa, with an air
Gallant yet noble: "Now we claim our share
From your sweet love, a share which is not small:
For in the sacrament one crumb is all."
Then taking her small face his hands between,
He kissed her on the brow with kiss serene,
Fit seal to that pure vision her young soul had seen.

Sicilians witnessed that King Pedro kept
His royal promise: Perdicone stept
To many honours honourably won,
Living with Lisa in true union.
Throughout his life the king still took delight
To call himself fair Lisa's faithful knight;
And never wore in field or tournament
A scarf or emblem save by Lisa sent.
Such deeds made subjects loyal in that land:
They joyed that one so worthy to command,
So chivalrous and gentle, had become
The king of Sicily, and filled the room
Of Frenchmen, who abused the Church's trust,
Till, in a righteous vengeance on their lust,

Messina rose, with God, and with the dagger's thrust.

L'envoi

Reader, this story pleased me long ago
In the bright pages of Boccaccio,
And where the author of a good we know,
Let us not fail to pay the grateful thanks we owe.

1869

A MINOR PROPHET

I HAVE a friend, a vegetarian seer,
By name Elias Baptist Butterworth,
A harmless, bland, disinterested man,
Whose ancestors in Cromwell's day believed
The Second Advent certain in five years,
But when King Charles the Second came instead,
Revised their date and sought another world:
I mean — not heaven but — America.
A fervid stock, whose generous hope embraced
The fortunes of mankind, not stopping short
At rise of leather, or the fall of gold,
Nor listening to the voices of the time
As housewives listen to a cackling hen,
With wonder whether she has laid her egg
On their own nest-egg. Still they did insist
Somewhat too wearisomely on the joys
Of their Millennium, when coats and hats
Would all be of one pattern, books and songs
All fit for Sundays, and the casual talk
As good as sermons preached extempore.

And in Elias the ancestral zeal
Breathes strong as ever, only modified
By Transatlantic air and modern thought.
You could not pass him in the street and fail
To note his shoulders' long declivity,
Beard to the waist, swan-neck, and large pale eyes;
Or, when he lifts his hat, to mark his hair
Brushed back to show his great capacity —
A full grain's length at the angle of the brow
Proving him witty, while the shallower men

Only seem witty in their repartees.
Not that he 's vain, but that his doctrine needs
The testimony of his frontal lobe.

On all points he adopts the latest views;
Takes for the key of universal Mind
The " levitation " of stout gentlemen;
Believes the Rappings are not spirits' work,
But the Thought-atmosphere's, a stream of brains
In correlated force of raps, as proved
By motion, heat, and science generally;
The spectrum, for example, which has shown
The selfsame metals in the sun as here;
So the Thought-atmosphere is everywhere:
High truths that glimmered under other names
To ancient sages, whence good scholarship
Applied to Eleusinian mysteries —
The Vedas — Tripitaka — Vendidad —
Might furnish weaker proof for weaker minds
That Thought was rapping in the hoary past,
And might have edified the Greeks by raps
At the greater Dionysia, if their ears
Had not been filled with Sophoclean verse.
And when all Earth is vegetarian —
When, lacking butchers, quadrupeds die out,
And less Thought-atmosphere is reabsorbed
By nerves of insects parasitical,
Those higher truths, seized now by higher minds
But not expressed (the insects hindering),
Will either flash out into eloquence,
Or better still, be comprehensible
By rappings simply, without need of roots.
'T is on this theme — the vegetarian world —
That good Elias willingly expands:
He loves to tell in mildly nasal tones
And vowels stretched to suit the widest views,

The future fortunes of our infant Earth —
When it will be too full of human kind
To have the room for wilder animals.
Saith he, Sahara will be populous
With families of gentlemen retired
From commerce in more Central Africa,
Who order coolness as we order coal,
And have a lobe anterior strong enough
To think away the sand-storms. Science thus
Will leave no spot on this terraqueous globe
Unfit to be inhabited by man,
The chief of animals: all meaner brutes
Will have been smoked and elbowed out of life.
No lions then shall lap Caffrarian pools,
Or shake the Atlas with their midnight roar:
Even the slow, slime-loving crocodile,
The last of animals to take a hint,
Will then retire forever from a scene
Where public feeling strongly sets against him.
Fishes may lead carnivorous lives obscure,
But must not dream of culinary rank
Or being dished in good society.
Imagination in that distant age,
Aiming at fiction called historical,
Will vainly try to reconstruct the times
When it was men's preposterous delight
To sit astride live horses, which consumed
Materials for incalculable cakes;
When there were milkmaids who drew milk from
cows
With udders kept abnormal for that end
Since the rude mythopœic period
Of Aryan dairymen, who did not blush
To call their milkmaid and their daughter one —
Helplessly gazing at the Milky Way,
Nor dreaming of the astral cocoa-nuts

Quite at the service of posterity.
'T is to be feared, though, that the duller boys,
Much given to anachronisms and nuts
(Elias has confessed boys will be boys),
May write a jockey for a centaur, think
Europa's suitor was an Irish bull,
Æsop a journalist who wrote up Fox,
And Bruin a chief swindler upon 'Change.
Boys will be boys, but dogs will all be moral,
With longer alimentary canals
Suited to diet vegetarian.
The uglier breeds will fade from memory,
Or, being palæontological,
Live but as portraits in large learned books,
Distasteful to the feelings of an age
Nourished on purest beauty. Earth will hold
No stupid brutes, no cheerful queernesses,
No naïve cunning, grave absurdity.
Wart-pigs with tender and parental grunts,
Wombats much flattened as to their contour,
Perhaps from too much crushing in the ark,
But taking meekly that fatality;
The serious cranes, unstung by ridicule;
Long-headed, short-legged, solemn-looking curs,
(Wise, silent critics of a flippant age);
The silly straddling foals, the weak-brained geese
Hissing fallaciously at sound of wheels —
All these rude products will have disappeared
Along with every faulty human type.
By dint of diet vegetarian
All will be harmony of hue and line,
Bodies and minds all perfect, limbs well-turned,
And talk quite free from aught erroneous.

Thus far Elias in his seer's mantle:
But at this climax in his prophecy

My sinking spirits, fearing to be swamped,
Urge me to speak. "High prospects these, my
friend,
Setting the weak carnivorous brain astretch;
We will resume the thread another day."
"To-morrow," cries Elias, "at this hour?"
"No, not to-morrow — I shall have a cold —
At least I feel some soreness — this endemic —
Good-bye."

No tears are sadder than the smile
With which I quit Elias. Bitterly
I feel that every change upon this earth
Is bought with sacrifice. My yearnings fail
To reach that high apocalyptic mount
Which shows in bird's-eye view a perfect world,
Or enter warmly into other joys
Than those of faulty, struggling human kind.
That strain upon my soul's too feeble wing
Ends in ignoble floundering: I fall
Into short-sighted pity for the men
Who living in those perfect future times
Will not know half the dear imperfect things
That move my smiles and tears — will never know
The fine old incongruities that raise
My friendly laugh; the innocent conceits
That like a needless eyeglass or black patch
Give those who wear them harmless happiness;
The twists and cracks in our poor earthenware
That touch me to more conscious fellowship
(I am not myself the finest Parian)
With my coevals. So poor Colin Clout,
To whom raw onion gives prospective zest,
Consoling hours of dampest wintry work,
Could hardly fancy any regal joys
Quite unimpregnate with the onion's scent:

Perhaps his highest hopes are not all clear
Of waftings from that energetic bulb;
'T is well that onion is not heresy.
Speaking in parable, I am Colin Clout.
A clinging flavour penetrates my life —
My onion is imperfectness. I cleave
To nature's blunders, evanescent types
Which sages banish from Utopia.
"Not worship beauty?" say you. Patience, friend!
I worship in the temple with the rest;
But by my hearth I keep a sacred nook
For gnomes and dwarfs, duck-footed waddling elves
Who stitched and hammered for the weary man
In days of old. And in that piety
I clothe ungainly forms inherited
From toiling generations, daily bent
At desk, or plough, or loom, or in the mine,
In pioneering labours for the world.
Nay, I am apt when floundering confused
From too rash flight, to grasp at paradox,
And pity future men who will not know
A keen experience with pity blent,
The pathos exquisite of lovely minds
Hid in harsh forms — not penetrating them
Like fire divine within a common bush
Which glows transfigured by the heavenly guest,
So that men put their shoes off; but encaged
Like a sweet child within some thick-walled cell,
Who leaps and fails to hold the window-bars.
But having shown a little dimpled hand
Is visited thenceforth by tender hearts
Whose eyes keep watch about the prison walls.
A foolish, nay, a wicked paradox!
For purest pity is the eye of love
Melting at sight of sorrow; and to grieve

Because it sees no sorrow, shows a love
Warped from its truer nature, turned to love
Of merest habit, like the miser's greed.
But I am Colin still: my prejudice
Is for the flavour of my daily food.
Not that I doubt the world is growing still
As once it grew from Chaos and from Night;
Or have a soul too shrunken for the hope
Which dawned in human breasts, a double morn,
With earliest watchings of the rising light
Chasing the darkness; and through many an age
Has raised the vision of a future time
That stands an Angel with a face all mild
Spearing the demon. I too rest in faith
That man's perfection is the crowning flower,
Toward which the urgent sap in life's great tree
Is pressing — seen in puny blossoms now,
But in the world's great morrows to expand
With broadest petal and with deepest glow.

Yet, see the patched and plodding citizen
Waiting upon the pavement with the throng
While some victorious world-hero makes
Triumphal entry, and the peal of shouts
And flash of faces 'neath uplifted hats
Run like a storm of joy along the streets!
He says, "God bless him!" almost with a sob,
As the great hero passes; he is glad
The world holds mighty men and mighty deeds,
The music stirs his pulses like strong wine,
The moving splendour touches him with awe —
'T is glory shed around the common weal,
And he will pay his tribute willingly,
Though with the pennies earned by sordid toil.
Perhaps the hero's deeds have helped to bring
A time when every honest citizen

Shall wear a coat unpatched. And yet he feels
More easy fellowship with neighbours there
Who look on too; and he will soon relapse
From noticing the banners and the steeds
To think with pleasure there is just one bun
Left in his pocket, that may serve to tempt
The wide-eyed lad, whose weight is all too much
For that young mother's arms: and then he falls
To dreamy picturing of sunny days
When he himself was a small big-cheeked lad
In some far village where no heroes came,
And stood a listener 'twixt his father's legs
In the warm firelight, while the old folk talked
And shook their heads and looked upon the floor;
And he was puzzled, thinking life was fine —
The bread and cheese so nice all through the year
And Christmas sure to come. Oh that good time!
He, could he choose, would have those days again
And see the dear old-fashioned things once more.
But soon the wheels and drums have all passed by
And tramping feet are heard like sudden rain:
The quiet startles our good citizen;
He feels the child upon his arms, and knows
He is with the people making holiday
Because of hopes for better days to come.
But Hope to him was like the brilliant west
Telling of sunrise in a world unknown,
And from that dazzling curtain of bright hues
He turned to the familiar face of fields
Lying all clear in the calm morning land.
Maybe 't is wiser not to fix a lens
Too scrutinizing on the glorious times
When Barbarossa shall arise and shake
His mountain, good King Arthur come again,
And all the heroes of such giant soul
That, living once to cheer mankind with hope,

They had to sleep until the time was ripe
For greater deeds to match their greater thought.
Yet no! the earth yields nothing more Divine
Than high prophetic vision — than the Seer
Who fasting from man's meaner joy beholds
The paths of beauteous order, and constructs
A fairer type, to shame our low content.
But prophecy is like potential sound
Which turned to music seems a voice sublime
From out the soul of light; but turns to noise
In scrannel pipes, and makes all ears averse.

The faith that life on earth is being shaped
To glorious ends, that order, justice, love,
Mean man's completeness, mean effect as sure
As roundness in the dew-drop — that great faith
Is but the rushing and expanding stream
Of thought, of feeling, fed by all the past.
Our finest hope is finest memory,
As they who love in age think youth is blest
Because it has a life to fill with love.
Full souls are double mirrors, making still
An endless vista of fair things before
Repeating things behind; so faith is strong
Only when we are strong, shrinks when we shrink;
It comes when music stirs us, and the chords
Moving on some grand climax shake our souls
With influx new that makes new energies.
It comes in swellings of the heart and tears
That rise at noble and at gentle deeds —
At labours of the master-artist's hand
Which, trembling, touches to a finer end,
Trembling before an image seen within.
It comes in moments of heroic love,
Unjealous joy in joy not made for us —
In conscious triumph of the good within —

Making us worship goodness that rebukes.
Even our failures are a prophecy,
Even our yearnings and our bitter tears
After that fair and true we cannot grasp;
As patriots who seem to die in vain
Make liberty more sacred by their pangs.

Presentiment of better things on earth
Sweeps in with every force that stirs our souls
To admiration, self-renouncing love,
Or thoughts, like light, that bind the world in one, —
Sweeps like the sense of vastness, when at night
We hear the roll and dash of waves that break
Nearer and nearer with the rushing tide,
Which rises to the level of the cliff
Because the wide Atlantic rolls behind,
Throbbing respondent to the far-off orbs.

1865

BROTHER AND SISTER

I

I CANNOT choose but think upon the time
When our two lives grew like two buds that kiss
At lightest thrill from the bee's swinging chime,
Because the one so near the other is.

He was the elder and a little man
Of forty inches, bound to show no dread,
And I the girl that puppy-like now ran,
Now lagged behind my brother's larger tread.

I held him wise, and when he talked to me
Of snakes and birds, and which God loved the best,
I thought his knowledge marked the boundary
Where men grew blind, though angels knew the rest.

If he said "Hush!" I tried to hold my breath;
Wherever he said "Come!" I stepped in faith.

II

Long years have left their writing on my brow,
But yet the freshness and the dew-fed beam
Of those young mornings are about me now,
When we two wandered toward the far-off stream

With rod and line. Our basket held a store
Baked for us only, and I thought with joy
That I should have my share, though he had more,
Because he was the elder and a boy.

The firmaments of daisies since to me
Have had those mornings in their opening eyes,
The bunchéd cowslip's pale transparency
Carries that sunshine of sweet memories,

And wild-rose branches take their finest scent
From those blest hours of infantine content.

III

Our mother bade us keep the trodden ways,
Stroked down my tippet, set my brother's frill,
Then with the benediction of her gaze
Clung to us lessening, and pursued us still

Across the homestead to the rookery elms,
Whose tall old trunks had each a grassy mound,
So rich for us, we counted them as realms
With varied products: here were earth-nuts found,

And here the Lady-fingers in deep shade;
Here sloping toward the Moat the rushes grew,
The large to split for pith, the small to braid;
While over all the dark rooks cawing flew,

And made a happy strange solemnity,
A deep-toned chant from life unknown to me.

IV

Our meadow-path had memorable spots:
One where it bridged a tiny rivulet,
Deep hid by tangled blue Forget-me-nots;
And all along the waving grasses met

My little palm, or nodded to my cheek,
When flowers with upturned faces gazing drew
My wonder downward, seeming all to speak
With eyes of souls that dumbly heard and knew.

Then came the copse, where wild things rushed unseen,
And black-scathed grass betrayed the past abode
Of mystic gypsies, who still lurked between
Me and each hidden distance of the road.

A gypsy once had startled me at play,
Blotting with her dark smile my sunny day.

V.

Thus rambling we were schooled in deepest lore,
And learned the meanings that give words a soul,
The fear, the love, the primal passionate store,
Whose shaping impulses make manhood whole.

Those hours were seed to all my after good;
My infant gladness, through eye, ear, and touch,
Took easily as warmth a various food
To nourish the sweet skill of loving much.

For who in age shall roam the earth and find
Reasons for loving that will strike out love
With sudden rod from the hard year-pressed mind?
Were reasons sown as thick as stars above,

'T is love must see them, as the eyes see light:
Day is but Number to the darkened sight.

VI

Our brown canal was endless to my thought;
And on its banks I sat in dreamy peace,
Unknowing how the good I loved was wrought,
Untroubled by the fear that it would cease.

Slowly the barges floated into view,
Rounding a grassy hill to me sublime
With some Unknown beyond it, whither flew
The parting cuckoo toward a fresh spring-time.

The wide-arched bridge, the scented elder-flowers,
The wondrous watery rings that died too soon,
The echoes of the quarry, the still hours
With white robe sweeping on the shadeless noon,

Were but my growing self, are part of me,
My present Past, my root of piety.

VII

Those long days measured by my little feet
Had chronicles which yield me many a text;
Where irony still finds an image meet
Of full-grown judgments in this world perplext.

One day my brother left me in high charge,
To mind the rod, while he went seeking bait,
And bade me, when I saw a nearing barge,
Snatch out the line, lest he should come too late.

Proud of the task, I watched with all my might
For one whole minute, till my eyes grew wide,
Till sky and earth took on a strange new light
And seemed a dream-world floating on some tide—

A fair pavilioned boat for me alone,
Bearing me onward through the vast unknown.

VIII

But sudden came the barge's pitch-black prow,
Nearer and angrier came my brother's cry,
And all my soul was quivering fear, when, lo!
Upon the imperilled line, suspended high,

A silver perch! My guilt that won the prey,
Now turned to merit, had a guerdon rich
Of hugs and praises, and made merry play,
Until my triumph reached its highest pitch

When all at home were told the wondrous feat,
And how the little sister had fished well.
In secret, though my fortune tasted sweet,
I wondered why this happiness befell.

"The little lass had luck," the gardener said:
And so I learned, luck was with glory wed.

IX

We had the selfsame world enlarged for each
By loving difference of girl and boy:
The fruit that hung on high beyond my reach
He plucked for me, and oft he must employ

A measuring glance to guide my tiny shoe
Where lay firm stepping-stones, or call to mind
"This thing I like my sister may not do,
For she is little, and I must be kind."

Thus boyish Will the nobler mastery learned
Where inward vision over impulse reigns,
Widening its life with separate life discerned,
A Like unlike, a Self that self restrains.

His years with others must the sweeter be
For those brief days he spent in loving me.

X

His sorrow was my sorrow, and his joy
Sent little leaps and laughs through all my frame;
My doll seemed lifeless and no girlish toy
Had any reason when my brother came.

I knelt with him at marbles, marked his fling
Cut the ringed stem and make the apple drop,
Or watched him winding close the spiral string
That looped the orbits of the humming top.

Grasped by such fellowship my vagrant thought
Ceased with dream-fruit dream-wishes to fulfil;
My aëry-picturing fantasy was taught
Subjection to the harder, truer skill

That seeks with deeds to grave a thought-tracked line,
And by "What is," "What will be" to define.

XI

School parted us; we never found again
That childish world where our two spirits mingled
Like scents from varying roses that remain
One sweetness, nor can evermore be singled.

Yet the twin habit of that early time
Lingered for long about the heart and tongue:
We had been natives of one happy clime,
And its dear accent to our utterance clung,

Till the dire years whose awful name is Change
Had grasped our souls still yearning in divorce,
And pitiless shaped them in two forms that range
Two elements which sever their life's course.

But were another childhood-world my share,
I would be born a little sister there.

1869

STRADIVARIUS

YOUR soul was lifted by the wings to-day
Hearing the master of the violin:
You praised him, praised the great Sebastian too
Who made that fine Chaconne: but did you think
Of old Antonio Stradivari? — him
Who a good century and half ago
Put his true work in that brown instrument
And by the nice adjustment of its frame
Gave it responsive life, continuous
With the master's finger-tips and perfected
Like them by delicate rectitude of use.
Not Bach alone, helped by fine precedent
Of genius gone before, nor Joachim
Who holds the strain afresh incorporate
By inward hearing and notation strict
Of nerve and muscle, made our joy to-day:
Another soul was living in the air
And swaying it to true deliverance
Of high invention and responsive skill:
That plain white-aproned man who stood at work
Patient and accurate full fourscore years,
Cherished his sight and touch by temperance,
And since keen sense is love of perfectness
Made perfect violins, the needed paths
For inspiration and high mastery.

No simpler man than he: he never cried,
"Why was I born to this monotonous task
Of making violins?" or flung them down
To suit with hurling act a well-hurled curse

At labour on such perishable stuff.
Hence neighbours in Cremona held him dull,
Called him a slave, a mill-horse, a machine,
Begged him to tell his motives or to lend
A few gold pieces to a loftier mind.
Yet he had pithy words full fed by fact;
For Fact, well-trusted, reasons and persuades,
Is gnomic, cutting, or ironical,
Draws tears, or is a tocsin to arouse —
Can hold all figures of the orator
In one plain sentence; has her pauses too —
Eloquent silence at the chasm abrupt
Where knowledge ceases. Thus Antonio
Made answers as Fact willed, and made them
strong.

Naldo, a painter of eclectic school,
Taking his dicers, candlelight and grins
From Caravaggio, and in holier groups
Combining Flemish flesh with martyrdom —
Knowing all tricks of style at thirty-one,
And weary of them, while Antonio
At sixty-nine wrought placidly his best,
Making the violin you heard to-day —
Naldo would tease him oft to tell his aims.
" Perhaps thou hast some pleasant vice to feed —
The love of louis d'ors in heaps of four,
Each violin a heap — I 've naught to blame;
My vices waste such heaps. But then, why work
With painful nicety? Since fame once earned
By luck or merit — oftenest by luck —
(Else why do I put Bonifazio's name
To work that '*pinxit Naldo*' would not sell?)
Is welcome index to the wealthy mob
Where they should pay their gold, and where they
pay

There they find merit — take your tow for
flax,
And hold the flax unlabelled with your name,
Too coarse for sufferance."
Antonio then:
" I like the gold — well, yes — but not for meals.
And as my stomach, so my eye and hand,
And inward sense that works along with both,
Have hunger that can never feed on coin.
Who draws a line and satisfies his soul,
Making it crooked where it should be straight?
An idiot with an oyster-shell may draw
His lines along the sand, all wavering,
Fixing no point or pathway to a point;
An idiot one remove may choose his line,
Straggle and be content; but God be praised,
Antonio Stradivari has an eye
That winces at false work and loves the true,
With hand and arm that play upon the tool
As willingly as any singing bird
Sets him to sing his morning roundelay,
Because he likes to sing and likes the song.

Then Naldo: " 'T is a petty kind of fame
At best, that comes of making violins;
And saves no masses, either. Thou wilt go
To purgatory none the less."
But he:
" 'T were purgatory here to make them ill;
And for my fame — when any master holds
'Twixt chin and hand a violin of mine,
He will be glad that Stradivari lived,
Made violins, and made them of the best.
The masters only know whose work is good;
They will choose mine, and while God gives them
skill

I give them instruments to play upon,
God choosing me to help Him."

"What! were God
At fault for violins, thou absent?"

"Yes;
He were at fault for Stradivari's work."

"Why, many hold Giuseppe's violins
As good as thine."

"May be: they are different.
His quality declines: he spoils his hand
With over-drinking. But were his the best,
He could not work for two. My work is mine,
And, heresy or not, if my hand slacked
I should rob God — since He is fullest good —
Leaving a blank instead of violins.
I say, not God Himself can make man's best
Without best men to help Him. I am one best
Here in Cremona, using sunlight well
To fashion finest maple till it serves
More cunningly than throats, for harmony.
'T is rare delight: I would not change my skill
To be the Emperor with bungling hands,
And lose my work, which comes as natural
As self at waking."

"Thou art little more
Than a deft potter's wheel, Antonio;
Turning out work by mere necessity
And lack of varied function. Higher arts
Subsist on freedom — eccentricity —
Uncounted inspirations — influence
That comes with drinking, gambling, talk turned
wild,
Then moody misery and lack of food —
With every dithyrambic fine excess:

These make at last a storm which flashes out
In lightning revelations. Steady work
Turns genius to a loom; the soul must lie
Like grapes beneath the sun till ripeness comes
And mellow vintage. I could paint you now
The finest Crucifixion; yesternight
Returning home I saw it on a sky
Blue-black, thick-starred. I want two louis d'ors
To buy the canvas and the costly blues —
Trust me a fortnight."

"Where are those last two
I lent thee for thy Judith? — her thou saw'st
In saffron gown, with Holofernes's head
And beauty all complete?"

"She is but sketched:
I lack the proper model — and the mood.
A great idea is an eagle's egg,
Craves time for hatching; while the eagle sits,
Feed her."

"If thou wilt call thy pictures eggs,
I call the hatching, Work. 'T is God gives skill,
But not without men's hands: He could not make
Antonio Stradivari's violins
Without Antonio. Get thee to thy easel."

1873

A COLLEGE BREAKFAST-PARTY

YOUNG Hamlet, not the hesitating Dane,
But one named after him, who lately strove
For honours at our English Wittenberg —
Blond, metaphysical, and sensuous,
Questioning all things and yet half convinced
Credulity were better; held inert
'Twixt fascinations of all opposites,
And half suspecting that the mightiest soul
(Perhaps his own?) was union of extremes,
Having no choice but choice of everything
As, drinking deep to-day for love of wine,
To-morrow half a Brahmin, scorning life
As mere illusion, yearning for that True
Which has no qualities; another day
Finding the fount of grace in sacraments,
And purest reflex of the light divine
In gem-bossed pyx and broidered chasuble,
Resolved to wear no stockings and to fast
With arms extended, waiting ecstasy;
But getting cramps instead, and needing change,
A would-be pagan next:
Young Hamlet sat
A guest with five of somewhat riper age
At breakfast with Horatio, a friend
With few opinions, but of faithful heart,
Quick to detect the fibrous spreading roots
Of character that feed men's theories,
Yet cloaking weaknesses with charity
And ready in all service save rebuke.
With ebb of breakfast and the cider-cup
Came high debate: the others seated there

Were Osric, spinner of fine sentences,
A delicate insect creeping over life
Feeding on molecules of floral breath,
And weaving gossamer to trap the sun;
Laertes, ardent, rash, and radical;
Discursive Rosencranz, grave Guildenstern,
And he for whom the social meal was made —
The polished priest, a tolerant listener,
Disposed to give a hearing to the lost,
And breakfast with them ere they went below.

From alpine metaphysic glaciers first
The talk sprang copious; the themes were old,
But so is human breath, so infant eyes,
The daily nurslings of creative light.
Small words held mighty meanings: Matter, Force,
Self, Not-self, Being, Seeming, Space and Time —
Plebeian toilers on the dusty road
Of daily traffic, turned to Genii
And cloudy giants darkening sun and moon.
Creation was reversed in human talk:
None said, "Let Darkness be," but Darkness was;
And in it weltered with Teutonic ease,
An argumentative Leviathan,
Blowing cascades from out his element,
The thunderous Rosencranz, till
"Truce, I beg!"
Said Osric, with nice accent. "I abhor
That battling of the ghosts, that strife of terms
For utmost lack of colour, form, and breath,
That tasteless squabbling called Philosophy
As if a blue-winged butterfly afloat
For just three days above the Italian fields,
Poising in sunshine, fluttering toward its bride,
Should fast and speculate, considering

What were if it were not? or what now is
Instead of that which seems to be itself?
Its deepest wisdom surely were to be
A sipping, marrying, blue-winged butterfly;
Since utmost speculation on itself
Were but a three days' living of worse sort —
A bruising struggle all within the bounds
Of butterfly existence."
"I protest,"
Burst in Laertes, "against arguments
That start with calling me a butterfly,
A bubble, spark, or other metaphor
Which carries your conclusions as a phrase
In quibbling law will carry property.
Put a thin sucker for my human lips
Fed at a mother's breast, who now needs food
That I will earn for her; put bubbles blown
From frothy thinking, for the joy, the love,
The wants, the pity, and the fellowship
(The ocean deeps I might say, were I bent
On bandying metaphors) that make a man —
Why, rhetoric brings within your easy reach
Conclusions worthy of — a butterfly.
The universe, I hold, is no charade,
No acted pun unriddled by a word,
Nor pain a decimal diminishing
With hocus-pocus of a dot or naught.
For those who know it, pain is solely pain:
Not any letters of the alphabet
Wrought syllogistically pattern-wise,
Nor any cluster of fine images,
Nor any missing of their figured dance
By blundering molecules. Analysis
May show you the right physic for the ill,
Teaching the molecules to find their dance,
Instead of sipping at the heart of flowers.

But spare me your analogies, that hold
Such insight as the figure of a crow
And bar of music put to signify
A crowbar."
Said the Priest, "There I agree —
Would add that sacramental grace is grace
Which to be known must first be felt, with all
The strengthening influxes that come by prayer.
I note this passingly — would not delay
The conversation's tenor, save to hint
That taking stand with Rosencranz one sees
Final equivalence of all we name
Our Good and Ill — their difference meanwhile
Being inborn prejudice that plumps you down
An Ego, brings a weight into your scale
Forcing a standard. That resistless weight
Obstinate, irremovable by thought,
Persisting through disproof, an ache, a need
That spaceless stays where sharp analysis
Has shown a plenum filled without it — what
If this, to use your phrase, were just that Being
Not looking solely, grasping from the dark,
Weighing the difference you call Ego? This
Gives you persistence, regulates the flux
With strict relation rooted in the All.
Who is he of your late philosophers
Takes the true name of Being to be Will?
I — nay, the Church objects naught, is content
Reason has reached its utmost negative,
Physic and metaphysic meet in the inane
And backward shrink to intense prejudice,
Making their absolute and homogene
A loaded relative, a choice to be
Whatever is — supposed: a What is not.
The Church demands no more, has standing room
And basis for her doctrine: this (no more) —

That the strong bias which we name the Soul,
Though fed and clad by dissoluble waves,
Has antecedent quality, and rules
By veto or consent the strife of thought,
Making arbitrament that we call faith."
Here was brief silence, till young Hamlet spoke.
"I crave direction, Father, how to know
The sign of that imperative whose right
To sway my act in face of thronging doubts
Were an oracular gem in price beyond
Urim and Thummim lost to Israel.
That bias of the soul, that conquering die
Loaded with golden emphasis of Will —
How find it where resolve, once made, becomes
The rash exclusion of an opposite
Which draws the stronger as I turn aloof."

"I think I hear a bias in your words,"
The Priest said mildly — "that strong natural bent
Which we call hunger. What more positive
Than appetite? — of spirit or of flesh,
I care not — 'sense of need' were truer phrase.
You hunger for authoritative right,
And yet discern no difference of tones,
No weight of rod that marks imperial rule?
Laertes granting, I will put your case
In analogic form: the doctors hold
Hunger which gives no relish — save caprice
That tasting venison fancies mellow pears —
A symptom of disorder, and prescribe
Strict discipline. Were I physician here
I would prescribe that exercise of soul
Which lies in full obedience: you ask,
Obedience to what? The answer lies
Within the word itself; for how obey
What has no rule, asserts no absolute claim?

Take inclination, taste — why, that is you,
No rule above you. Science, reasoning
On nature's order — they exist and move
Solely by disputation, hold no pledge
Of final consequence, but push the swing
Where Epicurus and the Stoic sit
In endless see-saw. One authority,
And only one, says simply this, Obey:
Place yourself in that current (test it so!)
Of spiritual order where at least
Lies promise of a high communion,
A Head informing members, Life that breathes
With gift of forces over and above
The *plus* of arithmetic interchange.
'The Church too has a body,' you object,
'Can be dissected, put beneath the lens
And shown the merest continuity
Of all existence else beneath the sun.'
I grant you; but the lens will not disprove
A present which eludes it. Take your wit,
Your highest passion, widest-reaching thought:
Show their conditions if you will or can,
But though you saw the final atom-dance
Making each molecule that stands for sign
Of love being present, where is still your love?
How measure that, how certify its weight?
And so I say, the body of the Church
Carries a Presence, promises and gifts
Never disproved — whose argument is found
In lasting failure of the search elsewhere
For what it holds to satisfy man's need.
But I grow lengthy: my excuse must be
Your question, Hamlet, which has probed right
through
To the pith of our belief. And I have robbed
Myself of pleasure as a listener.

'T is noon, I see; and my appointment stands
For half-past twelve with Voltimand. Good-bye."

Brief parting, brief regret — sincere, but quenched
In fumes of best Havana, which consoles
For lack of other certitude. Then said,
Mildly sarcastic, quiet Guildenstern:
" I marvel how the Father gave new charm
To weak conclusions: I was half convinced
The poorest reasoner made the finest man,
And held his logic lovelier for its limp."

" I fain would hear," said Hamlet, " how you find
A stronger footing than the Father gave.
How base your self-resistance save on faith
In some invisible Order, higher Right
Than changing impulse. What does Reason bid?
To take as fullest rationality
What offers best solution: so the Church.
Science, detecting hydrogen aflame
Outside our firmament, leaves mystery
Whole and untouched beyond; nay, in our blood
And in the potent atoms of each germ
The Secret lives — envelops, penetrates
Whatever sense perceives or thought divines.
Science, whose soul is explanation, halts
With hostile front at mystery. The Church
Takes mystery as her empire, brings its wealth
Of possibility to fill the void
'Twixt contradictions — warrants so a faith
Defying sense and all its ruthless train
Of arrogant ' Therefores.' Science with her lens
Dissolves the Forms that made the other half
Of all our love, which thenceforth widowed lives
To gaze with maniac stare at what is not.
The Church explains not, governs — feeds resolve

By vision fraught with heart-experience
And human yearning."
"Ay," said Guildenstern,
With friendly nod, "the Father, I can see,
Has caught you up in his air-chariot.
His thought takes rainbow-bridges, out of reach
By solid obstacles, evaporates
The coarse and common into subtilties,
Insists that what is real in the Church
Is something out of evidence, and begs
(Just in parenthesis) you 'll never mind
What stares you in the face and bruises you.
Why, by his method I could justify
Each superstition and each tyranny
That ever rode upon the back of man,
Pretending fitness for his sole defence
Against life's evil. How can aught subsist
That holds no theory of gain or good?
Despots with terror in their red right hand
Must argue good to helpers and themselves,
Must let submission hold a core of gain
To make their slaves choose life. Their theory,
Abstracting inconvenience of racks,
Whip-lashes, dragonnades and all things coarse
Inherent in the fact or concrete mass,
Presents the pure idea — utmost good
Secured by Order only to be found
In strict subordination, hierarchy
Of forces where, by nature's law, the strong
Has rightful empire, rule of weaker proved
Mere dissolution. What can you object?
The Inquisition — if you turn away
From narrow notice how the scent of gold
Has guided sense of damning heresy —
The Inquisition is sublime, is love
Hindering the spread of poison in men's souls:

The flames are nothing: only smaller pain
To hinder greater, or the pain of one
To save the many, such as throbs at heart
Of every system born into the world.
So of the Church as high communion
Of Head with members, fount of spirit force
Beyond the calculus, and carrying proof
In her sole power to satisfy man's need:
That seems ideal truth as clear as lines
That, necessary though invisible, trace
The balance of the planets and the sun —
Until I find a hitch in that last claim.
'To satisfy man's need.' Sir, that depends:
We settle first the measure of man's need
Before we grant capacity to fill.
John, James, or Thomas, you may satisfy:
But since you choose ideals I demand
Your Church shall satisfy ideal man,
His utmost reason and his utmost love.
And say these rest a-hungered — find no scheme
Content them both, but hold the world accursed,
A Calvary where Reason mocks at Love,
And Love forsaken sends out orphan cries
Hopeless of answer; still the soul remains
Larger, diviner than your half-way Church,
Which racks your reason into false consent,
And soothes your Love with sops of selfishness."
"There I am with you," cried Laertes. "What
To me are any dictates, though they came
With thunders from the Mount, if still within
I see a higher Right, a higher Good
Compelling love and worship? Though the earth
Held force electric to discern and kill
Each thinking rebel — what is martyrdom
But death-defying utterance of belief,

Which being mine remains my truth supreme
Though solitary as the throb of pain
Lying outside the pulses of the world?
Obedience is good: ay, but to what?
And for what ends? For say that I rebel
Against your rule as devilish, or as rule
Of thunder-guiding powers that deny
Man's highest benefit: rebellion then
Were strict obedience to another rule
Which bids me flout your thunder."
"Lo you now!"
Said Osric, delicately, "how you come,
Laertes mine, with all your warring zeal
As Python-slayer of the present age —
Cleansing all social swamps by darting rays
Of dubious doctrine, hot with energy
Of private judgment and disgust for doubt —
To state my thesis, which you most abhor
When sung in Daphnis-notes beneath the pines
To gentle rush of waters. Your belief —
In essence what is it but simply Taste?
I urge with you exemption from all claims
That come from other than my proper will,
An Ultimate within to balance yours,
A solid meeting you, excluding you,
Till you show fuller force by entering
My spiritual space and crushing Me
To a subordinate complement of You:
Such ultimate must stand alike for all.
Preach your crusade, then: all will join who like
The hurly-burly of aggressive creeds;
Still your unpleasant Ought, your itch to choose
What grates upon the sense, is simply Taste,
Differs, I think, from mine (permit the word,
Discussion forces it) in being bad."

The tone was too polite to breed offence,
Showing a tolerance of what was "bad"
Becoming courtiers. Louder Rosencranz
Took up the ball with rougher movement, wont
To show contempt for doting reasoners
Who hugged some reasons with a preference,
As warm Laertes did: he gave five puffs
Intolerantly sceptical, then said:
"Your human good, which you would make supreme,
How do you know it? Has it shown its face
In adamantine type, with features clear,
As this republic, or that monarchy?
As federal grouping, or municipal?
Equality, or finely shaded lines
Of social difference? ecstatic whirl
And draught intense of passionate joy and pain,
Or sober self-control that starves its youth
And lives to wonder what the world calls joy?
Is it in sympathy that shares men's pangs,
Or in cool brains that can explain them well?
Is it in labour or in laziness?
In training for the tug of rivalry
To be admired, or in the admiring soul?
In risk or certitude? In battling rage
And hardy challenges of Protean luck,
Or in a sleek and rural apathy
Full fed with sameness? Pray define your Good
Beyond rejection by majority;
Next, how it may subsist without the Ill
Which seems its only outline. Show a world
Of pleasure not resisted; or a world
Of pressure equalized, yet various
In action formative; for that will serve
As illustration of your human good —
Which at its perfecting (your goal of hope)

Will not be straight extinct, or fall to sleep
In the deep bosom of the Unchangeable.
What will you work for, then, and call it good
With full and certain vision — good for aught
Save partial ends which happen to be yours?
How will you get your stringency to bind
Thought or desire in demonstrated tracks
Which are but waves within a balanced whole?
Is 'relative' the magic word that turns
Your flux mercurial of good to gold?
Why, that analysis at which you rage
As anti-social force that sweeps you down
The world in one cascade of molecules,
Is brother 'relative' — and grins at you
Like any convict whom you thought to send
Outside society, till this enlarged
And meant New England and Australia too.
The Absolute is your shadow, and the space
Which you say might be real were you milled
To curves pellicular, the thinnest thin,
Equation of no thickness, is still you."

"Abstracting all that makes him clubbable,"
Horatio interposed. But Rosencranz,
Deaf as the angry turkey-cock whose ears
Are plugged by swollen tissues when he scolds
At men's pretensions: "Pooh, your 'Relative'
Shuts you in, hopeless, with your progeny
As in a Hunger-tower; your social good,
Like other deities by turn supreme,
Is transient reflex of a prejudice,
Anthology of causes and effects
To suit the mood of fanatics who lead
The mood of tribes or nations. I admit
If you could show a sword, nay, chance of sword
Hanging conspicuous to their inward eyes

With edge so constant threatening as to sway
All greed and lust by terror; and a law
Clear-writ and proven as the law supreme
Which that dread sword enforces — then your Right,
Duty, or social Good, were it once brought
To common measure with the potent law,
Would dip the scale, would put unchanging marks
Of wisdom or of folly on each deed,
And warrant exhortation. Until then,
Where is your standard or criterion?
'What always, everywhere, by all men' — why,
That were but Custom, and your system needs
Ideals never yet incorporate,
The imminent doom of Custom. Can you find
Appeal beyond the sentience in each man?
Frighten the blind with scarecrows? raise an awe
Of things unseen where appetite commands
Chambers of imagery in the soul
At all its avenues? — You chant your hymns
To Evolution, on your altar lay
A sacred egg called Progress: have you proved
A Best unique where all is relative,
And where each change is loss as well as gain?
The age of healthy Saurians, well supplied
With heat and prey, will balance well enough
A human age where maladies are strong
And pleasures feeble; wealth a monster gorged
'Mid hungry populations; intellect
Aproned in laboratories, bent on proof
That *this* is *that* and both are good for naught
Save feeding error through a weary life;
While Art and Poesy struggle like poor ghosts
To hinder cock-crow and the dreadful light,
Lurking in darkness and the charnel-house,
Or like two stalwart graybeards, imbecile

With limbs still active, playing at belief,
That hunt the slipper, foot-ball, hide-and-seek,
Are sweetly merry, donning pinafores
And lisping emulously in their speech.
O human race! Is this then all thy gain? —
Working at disproof, playing at belief,
Debate on causes, distaste of effects,
Power to transmute all elements, and lack
Of any power to sway the fatal skill
And make thy lot aught else than rigid doom?
The Saurians were better. — Guildenstern,
Pass me the taper. Still the human curse
Has mitigation in the best cigars."
Then swift Laertes, not without a glare
Of leonine wrath: "I thank thee for that word:
That one confession, were I Socrates,
Should force you onward till you ran your head
At your own image — flatly gave the lie
To all your blasphemy of that human good
Which bred and nourished you to sit at ease
And learnedly deny it. Say the world
Groans ever with the pangs of doubtful births:
Say, life 's a poor donation at the best —
Wisdom a yearning after nothingness —
Nature's great vision and the thrill supreme
Of thought-fed passion but a weary play —
I argue not against you. Who can prove
Wit to be witty when with deeper ground
Dulness intuitive declares wit dull?
If life is worthless to you — why, it is.
You only know how little love you feel
To give you fellowship, how little force
Responsive to the quality of things.
Then end your life, throw off the unsought
yoke.
If not — if you remain to taste cigars,

Choose racy diction, perorate at large
With tacit scorn of meaner men who win
No wreath or tripos — then admit at least
A possible Better in the seeds of earth;
Acknowledge debt to that laborious life
Which, sifting evermore the mingled seeds,
Testing the Possible with patient skill,
And daring ill in presence of a good
For futures to inherit, made your lot
One you would choose rather than end it, nay,
Rather than, say, some twenty million lots
Of fellow-Britons toiling all to make
That nation, that community, whereon
You feed and thrive and talk philosophy.
I am no optimist whose faith must hang
On hard pretence that pain is beautiful
And agony explained for men at ease
By virtue's exercise in pitying it.
But this I hold: that he who takes one gift
Made for him by the hopeful work of man,
Who tastes sweet bread, walks where he will unarmed,
His shield and warrant the invisible law,
Who owns a hearth and household charities,
Who clothes his body and his sentient soul
With skill and thoughts of men, and yet denies
A human good worth toiling for, is cursed
With worse negation than the poet feigned
In Mephistopheles. The Devil spins
His wire-drawn argument against all good
With sense of brimstone as his private lot,
And never drew a solace from the Earth."

Laertes fuming paused, and Guildenstern
Took up with cooler skill the fusillade:
"I meet your deadliest challenge, Rosencranz:

Where get, you say, a binding law, a rule
Enforced by sanction, and Ideal throned
With thunder in its hand? I answer, there
Whence every faith and rule has drawn its force
Since human consciousness awaking owned
An Outward, whose unconquerable sway
Resisted first and then subdued desire
By pressure of the dire Impossible
Urging to possible ends the active soul
And shaping so its terror and its love.
Why, you have said it — threats and promises
Depend on each man's sentience for their force:
All sacred rules, imagined or revealed,
Can have no form or potency apart
From the percipient and emotive mind.
God, duty, love, submission, fellowship,
Must first be framed in man, as music is,
Before they live outside him as a law.
And still they grow and shape themselves anew,
With fuller concentration in their life
Of inward and of outward energies
Blending to make the last result called Man,
Which means, not this or that philosopher
Looking through beauty into blankness, not
The swindler who has sent his fruitful lie
By the last telegram: it means the tide
Of needs reciprocal, toil, trust, and love —
The surging multitude of human claims
Which make 'a presence not to be put by'
Above the horizon of the general soul.
Is inward Reason shrunk to subtleties,
And inward wisdom pining passion-starved? —
The outward Reason has the world in store,
Regenerates passion with the stress of want,
Regenerates knowledge with discovery,
Shows sly rapacious Self a blunderer,

Widens dependence, knits the social whole
In sensible relation more defined.
Do Boards and dirty-handed millionnaires
Govern the planetary system? — sway
The pressure of the Universe? — decide
That man henceforth shall retrogress to ape,
Emptied of every sympathetic thrill
The All has wrought in him? dam up henceforth
The flood of human claims as private force
To turn their wheels and make a private hell
For fish-pond to their mercantile domain?
What are they but a parasitic growth
On the vast real and ideal world
Of man and nature blent in one divine?
Why, take your closing dirge — say evil grows
And good is dwindling; science mere decay,
Mere dissolution of ideal wholes
Which through the ages past alone have made
The earth and firmament of human faith;
Say, the small arc of Being we call man
Is near its mergence, what seems growing life
Naught but a hurrying change toward lower types,
The ready rankness of degeneracy.
Well, they who mourn for the world's dying good
May take their common sorrows for a rock,
On it erect religion and a church,
A worship, rites, and passionate piety —
The worship of the Best though crucified
And God-forsaken in its dying pangs;
The sacramental rites of fellowship
In common woe; visions that purify
Through admiration and despairing love
Which keep their spiritual life intact
Beneath the murderous clutches of disproof
And feed a martyr-strength."

"Religion high!"
(Rosencranz here) "But with communicants
Few as the cedars upon Lebanon —
A child might count them. What the world demands
Is faith coercive of the multitude."

"Tush, Guildenstern, you granted him too much,"
Burst in Laertes; "I will never grant
One inch of law to feeble blasphemies
Which hold no higher ratio to life —
Full vigorous human life that peopled earth
And wrought and fought and loved and bravely died —
Than the sick morning glooms of debauchees.
Old nations breed old children, wizened babes
Whose youth is languid and incredulous,
Weary of life without the will to die;
Their passions visionary appetites
Of bloodless spectres wailing that the world
For lack of substance slips from out their grasp;
Their thoughts the withered husks of all things dead,
Holding no force of germs instinct with life,
Which never hesitates but moves and grows.
Yet hear them boast in screams their godlike ill,
Excess of knowing! Fie on you, Rosencranz!
You lend your brains and fine-dividing tongue
For bass-notes to this shrivelled crudity,
This immature decrepitude that strains
To fill our ears and claim the prize of strength
For mere unmanliness. Out on them all! —
Wits, puling minstrels, and philosophers,
Who living softly prate of suicide,
And suck the commonwealth to feed their ease
While they vent epigrams and threnodies,

Mocking or wailing all the eager work
Which makes that public store whereon they feed.
Is wisdom flattened sense and mere distaste?
Why, any superstition warm with love,
Inspired with purpose, wild with energy
That streams resistless through its ready frame,
Has more of human truth within its life
Than souls that look through colour into naught —
Whose brain, too unimpassioned for delight,
Has feeble ticklings of a vanity
Which finds the universe beneath its mark,
And scorning the blue heavens as merely blue
Can only say, 'What then?' — pre-eminent
In wondrous want of likeness to their kind,
Founding that worship of sterility
Whose one supreme is vacillating Will
Which makes the Light, then says, ''T were better not.'"
Here rash Laertes brought his Handel-strain
As of some angry Polypheme, to pause;
And Osric, shocked at ardours out of taste,
Relieved the audience with a tenor voice
And delicate delivery.
"For me,
I range myself in line with Rosencranz
Against all schemes, religious or profane,
That flaunt a Good as pretext for a lash
To flog us all who have the better taste,
Into conformity, requiring me
At peril of the thong and sharp disgrace
To care how mere Philistines pass their lives;
Whether the English pauper-total grows
From one to two before the naughts; how far
Teuton will outbreed Roman; if the class
Of proletaires will make a federal band

To bind all Europe and America,
Throw, in their wrestling, every government,
Snatch the world's purse and keep the guillotine:
Or else (admitting these are casualties)
Driving my soul with scientific hail
That shuts the landscape out with particles;
Insisting that the Palingenesis
Means telegraphs and measure of the rate
At which the stars move — nobody knows where.
So far, my Rosencranz, we are at one.
But not when you blaspheme the life of Art,
The sweet perennial youth of Poesy,
Which asks no logic but its sensuous growth,
No right but loveliness; which fearless strolls
Betwixt the burning mountain and the sea,
Reckless of earthquake and the lava stream,
Filling its hour with beauty. It knows naught
Of bitter strife, denial, grim resolve.
Sour resignation, busy emphasis
Of fresh illusions named the new-born True,
Old Error's latest child; but as a lake
Images all things, yet within its depths
Dreams them all lovelier — thrills with sound
And makes a harp of plenteous liquid chords —
So Art or Poesy: we its votaries
Are the Olympians, fortunately born
From the elemental mixture; 't is our lot
To pass more swiftly than the Delian God,
But still the earth breaks into flowers for us,
And mortal sorrows when they reach our ears
Are dying falls to melody divine.
Hatred, war, vice, crime, sin, those human storms,
Cyclones, floods, what you will — outbursts of force —
Feed art with contrast, give the grander touch
To the master's pencil and the poet's song,

Serve as Vesuvian fires or navies tossed
On yawning waters, which when viewed afar
Deepen the calm sublime of those choice souls
Who keep the heights of poesy and turn
A fleckless mirror to the various world,
Giving its many-named and fitful flux
An imaged, harmless, spiritual life,
With pure selection, native to art's frame,
Of beauty only, save its minor scale
Of ill and pain to give the ideal joy
A keener edge. This is a mongrel globe;
All finer being wrought from its coarse earth
Is but accepted privilege: what else
Your boasted virtue, which proclaims itself
A good above the average consciousness?
Nature exists by partiality
(Each planet's poise must carry two extremes
With verging breadths of minor wretchedness):
We are her favourites and accept our wings.
For your accusal, Rosencranz, that art
Shares in the dread and weakness of the time,
I hold it null; since art or poesy pure,
Being blameless by all standards save her own,
Takes no account of modern or antique
In morals, science, or philosophy:
No dull elenchus makes a yoke for her,
Whose law and measure are the sweet consent
Of sensibilities that move apart
From rise or fall of systems, states or creeds —
Apart from what Philistines call man's weal."

"Ay, we all know those votaries of the Muse
Ravished with singing till they quite forgot
Their manhood, sang, and gaped, and took no
food,
Then died of emptiness, and for reward

Lived on as grasshoppers" — Laertes thus:
But then he checked himself as one who feels
His muscles dangerous, and Guildenstern
Filled up the pause with calmer confidence.

"You use your wings, my Osric, poise yourself
Safely outside all reach of argument,
Then dogmatize at will (a method known
To ancient women and philosophers,
Nay, to Philistines whom you most abhor);
Else, could an arrow reach you, I should ask
Whence came taste, beauty, sensibilities
Refined to preference infallible?
Doubtless, ye 're gods — these odours ye inhale,
A sacrificial scent. But how, I pray,
Are odours made, if not by gradual change
Of sense or substance? Is your beautiful
A seedless, rootless flower, or has it grown
With human growth, which means the rising sun
Of human struggle, order, knowledge? — sense
Trained to a fuller record, more exact —
To truer guidance of each passionate force?
Get me your roseate flesh without the blood;
Get fine aromas without structure wrought
From simpler being into manifold:
Then and then only flaunt your Beautiful
As what can live apart from thought, creeds, states.
Which mean life's structure. Osric, I beseech —
The infallible should be more catholic —
Join in a war-dance with the cannibals,
Hear Chinese music, love a face tattooed,
Give adoration to a pointed skull,
And think the Hindu Siva looks divine:
'T is art, 't is poesy. Say, you object:
How came you by that lofty dissidence,
If not through changes in the social man

Widening his consciousness from Here and Now
To larger wholes beyond the reach of sense;
Controlling to a fuller harmony
The thrill of passion and the rule of fact;
And paling false ideals in the light
Of full-rayed sensibilities which blend
Truth and desire? Taste, beauty, what are they
But the soul's choice toward perfect bias wrought
By finer balance of a fuller growth —
Sense brought to subtlest metamorphosis
Through love, thought, joy — the general human store
Which grows from all life's functions? As the plant
Holds its corolla, purple, delicate,
Solely as outflush of that energy
Which moves transformingly in root and branch."
Guildenstern paused, and Hamlet quivering
Since Osric spoke, in transit imminent
From catholic striving into laxity,
Ventured his word. "Seems to me, Guildenstern,
Your argument, though shattering Osric's point
That sensibilities can move apart
From social order, yet has not annulled
His thesis that the life of poesy
(Admitting it must grow from out the whole)
Has separate functions, a transfigured realm
Freed from the rigours of the practical,
Where what is hidden from the grosser world —
Stormed down by roar of engines and the shouts
Of eager concourse — rises beauteous
As voice of water-drops in sapphire caves;
A realm where finest spirits have free sway
In exquisite selection, uncontrolled
By hard material necessity
Of cause and consequence. For you will grant

The Ideal has discoveries which ask
No test, no faith, save that we joy in them:
A new-found continent, with spreading lands
Where pleasure charters all, where virtue, rank,
Use, right, and truth have but one name, Delight.
Thus Art's creations, when etherealized
To least admixture of the grosser fact
Delight may stamp as highest."

"Possible!"
Said Guildenstern, with touch of weariness,
"But then we might dispute of what is gross,
What high, what low."

"Nay," said Laertes, "ask
The mightiest makers who have reigned, still reign
Within the ideal realm. See if their thought
Be drained of practice and the thick warm blood
Of hearts that beat in action various
Through the wide drama of the struggling world.
Good-bye, Horatio."

Each now said "Good-bye."
Such breakfast, such beginning of the day
Is more than half the whole. The sun was hot
On southward branches of the meadow elms,
The shadows slowly farther crept and veered
Like changing memories, and Hamlet strolled
Alone and dubious on the empurpled path
Between the waving grasses of new June
Close by the stream where well-compacted boats
Were moored or moving with a lazy creak
To the soft dip of oars. All sounds were light
As tiny silver bells upon the robes
Of hovering silence. Birds made twitterings

That seemed but Silence' self o'erfull of love.
'T was invitation all to sweet repose;
And Hamlet, drowsy with the mingled draughts
Of cider and conflicting sentiments,
Chose a green couch and watched with half-closed eyes
The meadow-road, the stream and dreamy lights,
Until they merged themselves in sequence strange
With undulating ether, time, the soul,
The will supreme, the individual claim,
The social Ought, the lyrist's liberty,
Democritus, Pythagoras, in talk
With Anselm, Darwin, Comte, and Schopenhauer,
The poets rising slow from out their tombs
Summoned as arbiters — that border-world
Of dozing, ere the sense is fully locked.
And then he dreamed a dream so luminous
He woke (he says) convinced; but what it taught
Withholds as yet. Perhaps those graver shades
Admonished him that visions told in haste
Part with their virtues to the squandering lips
And leave the soul in wider emptiness.

April, 1874

TWO LOVERS

TWO lovers by a moss-grown spring:
They leaned soft cheeks together there,
Mingled the dark and sunny hair,
And heard the wooing thrushes sing.
O budding time!
O love's blest prime!

Two wedded from the portal stept:
The bells made happy carollings,
The air was soft as fanning wings,
White petals on the pathway slept.
O pure-eyed bride!
O tender pride!

Two faces o'er a cradle bent:
Two hands above the head were locked:
These pressed each other while they rocked,
Those watched a life that love had sent.
O solemn hour!
O hidden power!

Two parents by the evening fire:
The red light fell about their knees
On heads that rose by slow degrees
Like buds upon the lily spire.
O patient life!
O tender strife!

The two still sat together there,
  The red light shone about their knees;
  But all the heads by slow degrees
Had gone and left that lonely pair.
  O voyage fast!
  O vanished past!

The red light shone upon the floor
  And made the space between them wide;
  They drew their chairs up side by side,
Their pale cheeks joined, and said, "Once more!"
  O memories!
  O past that is!

1866

SELF AND LIFE

Self

CHANGEFUL comrade, Life of mine,
Before we two must part,
I will tell thee, thou shalt say,
What thou hast been and art.
Ere I lose my hold of thee
Justify thyself to me.

Life

I was thy warmth upon thy mother's knee
When light and love within her eyes were one;
We laughed together by the laurel-tree,
Culling warm daisies 'neath the sloping sun;

We heard the chickens' lazy croon,
Where the trellised woodbines grew,
And all the summer afternoon
Mystic gladness o'er thee threw.
Was it person? Was it thing?
Was it touch or whispering?
It was bliss and it was I:
Bliss was what thou knew'st me by.

Self

Soon I knew thee more by Fear
And sense of what was not,
Haunting all I held most dear;
I had a double lot:
Ardour, cheated with alloy,
Wept the more for dreams of joy.

LIFE

Remember how thy ardour's magic sense
  Made poor things rich to thee and small things
    great;
How hearth and garden, field and bushy fence,
  Were thy own eager love incorporate;

    And how the solemn, splendid Past
      O'er thy early widened earth
    Made grandeur, as on sunset cast
      Dark elms near take mighty girth.
        Hands and feet were tiny still
        When we knew the historic thrill,
        Breathed deep breath in heroes dead,
        Tasted the immortals' bread.

SELF

Seeing what I might have been
  Reproved the thing I was,
Smoke on heaven's clearest sheen,
  The speck within the rose.
By revered ones' frailties stung
Reverence was with anguish wrung.

LIFE

But all thy anguish and thy discontent
  Was growth of mine, the elemental strife
Toward feeling manifold with vision blent
  To wider thought: I was no vulgar life

    That, like water-mirrored ape,
      Not discerns the thing it sees,
    Nor knows its own in others' shape,
      Railing, scorning, at its ease.

Half man's truth must hidden lie
If unlit by Sorrow's eye.
I by Sorrow wrought in thee
Willing pain of ministry.

SELF

Slowly was the lesson taught
Through passion, error, care;
Insight was the loathing fraught
And effort with despair.
Written on the wall I saw
"Bow!" I knew, not loved, the law.

LIFE

But then I brought a love that wrote within
The law of gratitude, and made thy heart
Beat to the heavenly tune of seraphim
Whose only joy in having is, to impart:

Till thou, poor Self — despite thy ire,
Wrestling 'gainst my mingled share,
Thy faults, hard falls, and vain desire
Still to be what others were —
Filled, o'erflowed with tenderness
Seeming more as thou wert less,
Knew me through that anguish past
As a fellowship more vast.

SELF

Yea, I embrace thee, changeful Life!
Far-sent, unchosen mate!
Self and thou, no more at strife,
Shall wed in hallowed state.
Willing spousals now shall prove
Life is justified by love.

"SWEET EVENINGS COME AND GO, LOVE"

La noche buena se viene,
La noche buena se va,
Y nosotros nos iremos
Y no volveremos mas.

Old Villancico.

SWEET evenings come and go, love,
They came and went of yore:
This evening of our life, love,
Shall go and come no more.

When we have passed away, love,
All things will keep their name;
But yet no life on earth, love,
With ours will be the same.

The daisies will be there, love,
The stars in heaven will shine:
I shall not feel thy wish, love,
Nor thou my hand in thine.

A better time will come, love,
And better souls be born:
I would not be the best, love,
To leave thee now forlorn.

THE DEATH OF MOSES

MOSES, who spake with God as with his friend,
And ruled his people with the twofold power
Of wisdom that can dare and still be meek,
Was writing his last word, the sacred name
Unutterable of that Eternal Will
Which was and is and evermore shall be.
Yet was his task not finished, for the flock
Needed its shepherd and the life-taught sage
Leaves no successor; but to chosen men,
The rescuers and guides of Israel,
A death was given called the Death of Grace,
Which freed them from the burden of the flesh
But left them rulers of the multitude
And loved companions of the lonely. This
Was God's last gift to Moses, this the hour
When soul must part from self and be but soul.

God spake to Gabriel, the messenger
Of mildest death that draws the parting life
Gently, as when a little rosy child
Lifts up its lips from off the bowl of milk
And so draws forth a curl that dipped its gold
In the soft white — thus Gabriel draws the soul.
"Go bring the soul of Moses unto me!"
And the awe-stricken angel answered, "Lord,
How shall I dare to take his life who lives
Sole of his kind, not to be likened once
In all the generations of the earth?"

Then God called Michaël, him of pensive brow,
Snow-vest and flaming sword, who knows and
acts:
"Go bring the spirit of Moses unto me!"
But Michaël with such grief as angels feel,
Loving the mortals whom they succour, pled:
"Almighty spare me; it was I who taught
Thy servant Moses; he is part of me
As I of thy deep secrets, knowing them."

Then God called Zamaël, the terrible,
The angel of fierce death, of agony
That comes in battle and in pestilence
Remorseless, sudden or with lingering throes.
And Zamaël, his raiment and broad wings
Blood-tinctured, the dark lustre of his eyes
Shrouding the red, fell like the gathering night
Before the prophet. But that radiance
Won from the heavenly presence in the mount
Gleamed on the prophet's brow and dazzling
pierced
Its conscious opposite: the angel turned
His murky gaze aloof and inly said:
"An angel this, deathless to angel's stroke."

But Moses felt the subtly nearing dark:
"Who art thou? and what wilt thou?" Zamaël then:
"I am God's reaper; through the fields of life
I gather ripened and unripened souls
Both willing and unwilling. And I come
Now to reap thee." But Moses cried,
Firm as a seer who waits the trusted sign:
"Reap thou the fruitless plant and common herb—
Not him who from the womb was sanctified
To teach the law of purity and love."
And Zamaël baffled from his errand fled.

But Moses, pausing, in the air serene
Heard now that mystic whisper, far yet near,
The all-penetrating Voice, that said to him,
"Moses, the hour is come and thou must die."
"Lord, I obey; but thou rememberest
How thou, Ineffable, didst take me once
Within thy orb of light untouched by death."
Then the voice answered, "Be no more afraid:
With me shall be thy death and burial."
So Moses waited, ready now to die.

And the Lord came, invisible as a thought,
Three angels gleaming on his secret track,
Prince Michaël, Zagaël, Gabriel, charged to guard
The soul-forsaken body as it fell
And bear it to the hidden sepulchre
Denied forever to the search of man.
And the Voice said to Moses: "Close thine eyes."
He closed them. "Lay thine hand upon thine heart,
And draw thy feet together." He obeyed.
And the Lord said, "O spirit! child of mine!
A hundred years and twenty thou hast dwelt
Within this tabernacle wrought of clay.
This is the end: come forth and flee to heaven."

But the grieved soul with plaintive pleading cried,
"I love this body with a clinging love:
The courage fails me, Lord, to part from it."
"O child, come forth! for thou shalt dwell with me
About the immortal throne where seraphs joy
In growing vision and in growing love."

Yet hesitating, fluttering, like the bird
With young wing weak and dubious, the soul

Stayed. But behold! upon the death-dewed lips
A kiss descended, pure, unspeakable —
The bodiless Love without embracing Love
That lingered in the body, drew it forth
With heavenly strength and carried it to heaven.

But now beneath the sky the watchers all,
Angels that keep the homes of Israel
Or on high purpose wander o'er the world
Leading the Gentiles, felt a dark eclipse:
The greatest ruler among men was gone.
And from the westward sea was heard a wail,
A dirge as from the isles of Javanim,
Crying, "Who now is left upon the earth
Like him to teach the right and smite the wrong?"
And from the East, far o'er the Syrian waste,
Came slowlier, sadlier, the answering dirge:
"No prophet like him lives or shall arise
In Israel or the world forevermore."

But Israel waited, looking toward the mount,
Till with the deepening eve the elders came
Saying, "His burial is hid with God.
We stood far off and saw the angels lift
His corpse aloft until they seemed a star
That burnt itself away within the sky."
The people answered with mute orphaned gaze
Looking for what had vanished evermore.
Then through the gloom without them and within
The spirit's shaping light, mysterious speech,
Invisible Will wrought clear in sculptured sound,
The thought-begotten daughter of the voice,
Thrilled on their listening sense: "He has no
tomb.
He dwells not with you dead, but lives as Law."

ARION

(*Herod. i. 24*)

ARION, whose melodic soul
Taught the dithyramb to roll
Like forest fires, and sing
Olympian suffering,

Had carried his diviner lore
From Corinth to the sister shore
Where Greece could largelier be,
Branching o'er Italy.

Then weighted with his glorious name
And bags of gold, aboard he came
'Mid harsh seafaring men
To Corinth bound again.

The sailors eyed the bags and thought:
"The gold is good, the man is naught —
And who shall track the wave
That opens for his grave?"

With brawny arms and cruel eyes
They press around him where he lies
In sleep beside his lyre,
Hearing the Muses quire.

He waked and saw this wolf-faced Death
Breaking the dream that filled his breath
With inspirations strong
Of yet unchanted song.

"Take, take my gold and let me live!"
He prayed, as kings do when they give
Their all with royal will,
Holding born kingship still.

To rob the living they refuse,
One death or other he must choose,
Either the watery pall
Or wounds and burial.

"My solemn robe then let me don,
Give me high space to stand upon,
That dying I may pour
A song unsung before."

It pleased them well to grant this prayer,
To hear for naught how it might fare
With men who paid their gold
For what a poet sold.

In flowing stole, his eyes aglow
With inward fire, he neared the prow
And took his god-like stand,
The cithara in hand.

The wolfish men all shrank aloof,
And feared this singer might be proof
Against their murderous power,
After his lyric hour.

But he, in liberty of song,
Fearless of death or other wrong,
With full spondaic toll
Poured forth his mighty soul:

Poured forth the strain his dream had taught,
A nome with lofty passion fraught
Such as makes battles won
On fields of Marathon.

The last long vowels trembled then
As awe within those wolfish men:
They said, with mutual stare,
Some god was present there.

But lo! Arion leaped on high,
Ready, his descant done, to die;
Not asking, "Is it well?"
Like a pierced eagle fell.

1873

"OH MAY I JOIN THE CHOIR INVISIBLE"

Longum illud tempus, quum non ero, magis me movet, quam hoc exiguum. — CICERO, ad Att., xii. 18.

OH may I join the choir invisible
Of those immortal dead who live again
In minds made better by their presence: live
In pulses stirred to generosity,
In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
For miserable aims that end with self,
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,
And with their mild persistence urge man's search
To vaster issues.

So to live is heaven:
To make undying music in the world,
Breathing as beauteous order that controls
With growing sway the growing life of man.
So we inherit that sweet purity
For which we struggled, failed, and agonized
With widening retrospect that bred despair.
Rebellious flesh that would not be subdued,
A vicious parent shaming still its child
Poor anxious penitence, is quick dissolved;
Its discords, quenched by meeting harmonies,
Die in the large and charitable air.
And all our rarer, better, truer self,
That sobbed religiously in yearning song,
That watched to ease the burden of the world,
Laboriously tracing what must be,
And what may yet be better — saw within

A worthier image for the sanctuary,
And shaped it forth before the multitude
Divinely human, raising worship so
To higher reverence more mixed with love —
That better self shall live till human Time
Shall fold its eyelids, and the human sky
Be gathered like a scroll within the tomb
Unread forever.
This is life to come,
Which martyred men have made more glorious
For us who strive to follow. May I reach
That purest heaven, be to other souls
The cup of strength in some great agony,
Enkindle generous ardour, feed pure love,
Beget the smiles that have no cruelty —
Be the sweet presence of a good diffused,
And in diffusion ever more intense.
So shall I join the choir invisible
Whose music is the gladness of the world.

1867

THE END

George Eliot in 1864

From the portrait by Sir Frederick Burton. By courtesy of Messrs. A. C. McClurg & Co.

WORKS OF

GEORGE ELIOT

LIFE OF GEORGE ELIOT

PART ONE

BIGELOW, BROWN & CO., INC.

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George Eliot's Life

INTRODUCTORY SKETCH OF CHILDHOOD

"*NOV.* 22, 1819. — Mary Ann Evans was born at Arbury Farm,[1] at five o'clock this morning."

This is an entry in Mr. Robert Evans's handwriting on the page of an old diary that now lies before me, and records, with characteristic precision, the birth of his youngest child, afterwards known to the world as George Eliot. Let us pause for a moment to pay its due homage to the precision, because it was in all probability to this most noteworthy quality of her father's nature that the future author was indebted for one of the principal elements of her own after success, — the enormous faculty for taking pains. The baby was born on St. Cecilia's day, and Mr. Evans, being a good Churchman, takes her, on the 29th November, to be baptised in the church at Chilvers Coton, — the parish in which Arbury Farm lies, — a church destined to impress itself strongly on the child's imagination, and to be known by many people in many lands afterwards as Shepperton Church. The father was a remarkable man, and many of the leading traits in his character are to be found

[1] The farm is also known as the South Farm, Arbury.

in Adam Bede and in Caleb Garth, — although, of course, neither of these is a portrait. He was born in 1773, at Roston Common, in the parish of Norbury, in the county of Derby, son of a George Evans, who carried on the business of builder and carpenter there: the Evans family having come originally from Northop, in Flintshire. Robert was brought up to the business, and after a time changed his residence to Ellastone, in Staffordshire. About 1799, or a little before, he held a farm of Mr. Francis Newdigate at Kirk Hallam, in Derbyshire, and became his agent. On Sir Roger Newdigate's death, the Arbury estate came to Mr. Francis Newdigate for his life, and Mr. Evans accompanied him into Warwickshire in 1806 in the capacity of agent. In 1801 he had married Harriott Poynton, by whom he had two children, — Robert, born 1802, at Ellastone, and Frances Lucy, born 1805, at Kirk Hallam. His first wife died in 1809; and on 8th February, 1813, he married Christiana Pearson, by whom he had three children, — Christiana, born 1814; Isaac, born 1816; and Mary Ann, born 1819. Shortly after the last child's birth, Robert, the son, became the agent, under his father, for the Kirk Hallam property, and lived there with his sister Frances, who afterwards married a Mr. Houghton. In March, 1820, when the baby girl was only four months old, the Evans family removed to Griff, a charming red-brick, ivy-covered house on the Arbury estate, — "the warm little nest where her affections were fledged," — and there George Eliot spent the first twenty-one years of her life.

Let us remember what the England was upon which this observant child opened her eyes.

The date of her birth was removed from the beginning of the French Revolution by just the same period of time as separates a child born this year, 1884, from the beginning of the Crimean War. To a man of forty-six to-day, the latter event seems but of yesterday. It took place at a very impressionable period of his life, and the remembrance of every detail is perfectly vivid. Mr. Evans was forty-six when his youngest child was born. He was a youth of sixteen when the Revolution began, and that mighty event, with all its consequences, had left an indelible impression on him, and the convictions and conclusions it had fostered in his mind permeated through to his children, and entered as an indestructible element into the susceptible soul of his youngest daughter. There are bits in the paper "Looking Backward," in "Theophrastus Such," which are true autobiography.

"In my earliest remembrance of my father his hair was already grey, for I was his youngest child; and it seemed to me that advanced age was appropriate to a father, as indeed in all respects I considered him a parent so much to my honour that the mention of my relationship to him was likely to secure me regard among those to whom I was otherwise a stranger, — his stories from his life including so many names of distant persons that my imagination placed no limit to his acquaintanceship. . . . Nor can I be sorry, though myself given to meditative if not active innovation, that my father was a Tory who had not exactly a dislike to innovators and dissenters, but a slight opinion of them as persons of ill-founded self-confidence. . . . And I often smile at my consciousness that certain conservative preposses-

sions have mingled themselves for me with the influences of our midland scenery, from the tops of the elms down to the buttercups and the little wayside vetches. Naturally enough. That part of my father's prime to which he oftenest referred had fallen on the days when the great wave of political enthusiasm and belief in a speedy regeneration of all things had ebbed, and the supposed millennial initiative of France was turning into a Napoleonic empire. . . . To my father's mind the noisy teachers of revolutionary doctrine were, to speak mildly, a variable mixture of the fool and the scoundrel; the welfare of the nation lay in a strong Government which could maintain order; and I was accustomed to hear him utter the word 'Government' in a tone that charged it with awe, and made it part of my effective religion, in contrast with the word 'rebel,' which seemed to carry the stamp of evil in its syllables, and, lit by the fact that Satan was the first rebel, made an argument dispensing with more detailed inquiry."

This early association of ideas must always be borne in mind, as it is the key to a great deal in the mental attitude of the future thinker and writer. It is the foundation of the latent Conservative bias.

The year 1819 is memorable as a culminating period of bad times and political discontent in England. The nation was suffering acutely from the reaction after the excitement of the last Napoleonic war. George IV. did not come to the throne till January, 1820, so that George Eliot was born in the reign of George III. The trial of Queen Caroline was the topic of absorbing public interest. Waterloo was not yet an affair of five years old. Byron had four years, and Goethe had thirteen

years, still to live. The last of Miss Austen's novels had been published only eighteen months, and the first of the Waverley series only six years before. Thackeray and Dickens were boys at school, and George Sand, as a girl of fifteen, was leaving her loved freedom on the banks of the Indre for the Couvent des Anglaises at Paris. That "Greater Britain" (Canada and Australia), which to-day forms so large a reading public, was then scarcely more than a geographical expression, with less than half a million of inhabitants, all told, where at present there are eight million; and in the United States, where more copies of George Eliot's books are now sold than in any other quarter of the world, the population then numbered less than ten million where to-day it is fifty-five million. Including Great Britain, these English-speaking races have increased from thirty million in 1820 to one hundred million in 1884; and with the corresponding increase in education we can form some conception how a popular English writer's fame has widened its circle.

There was a remoteness about a detached country house, in the England of those days, difficult for us to conceive now with our railways, penny post, and telegraphs; nor is the Warwickshire country about Griff an exhilarating surrounding. There are neither hills nor vales, — no rivers, lakes, or sea, — nothing but a monotonous succession of green fields and hedgerows, with some fine trees. The only water to be seen is the "brown canal." The effect of such a landscape on an ordinary observer is not inspiring, but "effective magic is transcendent nature;" and with her transcendent nature George Eliot has transfigured these scenes, dear to midland souls, into many an

idyllic picture, known to those who know her books. In her childhood the great event of the day was the passing of the coach before the gate of Griff house, which lies at a bend of the highroad between Coventry and Nuneaton, and within a couple of miles of the mining village of Bedworth, where the land began "to be blackened with coal-pits, the rattle of handlooms to be heard in hamlets and villages. Here were powerful men walking queerly with knees bent outward from squatting in the mine, going home to throw themselves down in their blackened flannel and sleep through the daylight, then rise and spend much of their high wages at the ale-house with their fellows of the Benefit Club; here the pale eager faces of hand-loom-weavers, men and women, haggard from sitting up late at night to finish the week's work, hardly begun till the Wednesday. Everywhere the cottages and the small children were dirty, for the languid mothers gave their strength to the loom; pious Dissenting women, perhaps, who took life patiently, and thought that salvation depended chiefly on predestination, and not at all on cleanliness. The gables of Dissenting chapels now made a visible sign of religion, and of a meeting-place to counterbalance the ale-house, even in the hamlets. . . . Here was a population not convinced that old England was as good as possible; here were multitudinous men and women aware that their religion was not exactly the religion of their rulers, who might therefore be better than they were, and who, if better, might alter many things which now made the world perhaps more painful than it need be, and certainly more sinful. Yet there were the grey steeples too, and the churchyards, with their grassy mounds and venerable

headstones, sleeping in the sunlight; there were broad fields and homesteads, and fine old woods covering a rising ground, or stretching far by the roadside, allowing only peeps at the park and mansion which they shut in from the working-day world. In these midland districts the traveller passed rapidly from one phase of English life to another: after looking down on a village dingy with coal-dust, noisy with the shaking of looms, he might skirt a parish all of fields, high hedges, and deep-rutted lanes; after the coach had rattled over the pavement of a manufacturing town, the scene of riots and trades-union meetings, it would take him in another ten minutes into a rural region, where the neighbourhood of the town was only felt in the advantages of a near market for corn, cheese, and hay, and where men with a considerable banking account were accustomed to say that 'they never meddled with politics themselves.'" [1]

We can imagine the excitement of a little four-year-old girl and her seven-year-old brother waiting on bright frosty mornings to hear the far-off ringing beat of the horses' feet upon the hard ground, and then to see the gallant appearance of the four greys, with coachman and guard in scarlet, outside passengers muffled up in furs, and baskets of game and other packages hanging behind the boot, as his Majesty's mail swung cheerily round on its way from Birmingham to Stamford. Two coaches passed the door daily, — one from Birmingham at 10 o'clock in the morning, the other from Stamford at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. These were the chief connecting links between the household at Griff and the outside world. Other-

[1] "Felix Holt," — Introduction.

wise life went on with that monotonous regularity which distinguishes the country from the town. And it is to these circumstances of her early life that a great part of the quality of George Eliot's writing is due, and that she holds the place she has attained in English literature. Her roots were down in the pre-railroad, pre-telegraphic period, — the days of fine old leisure, — but the fruit was formed during an era of extraordinary activity in scientific and mechanical discovery. Her genius was the outcome of these conditions. It could not have existed in the same form deprived of either influence. Her father was busy both with his own farm work and increasing agency business. He was already remarked in Warwickshire for his knowledge and judgment in all matters relating to land, and for his general trustworthiness and high character, so that he was constantly selected as arbitrator and valuer. He had a wonderful eye, especially for valuing woods, and could calculate with almost absolute precision the quantity of available timber in a standing tree. In addition to his merits as a man of business, he had the good fortune to possess the warm friendship and consistent support of Colonel Newdigate of Astley Castle, son of Mr. Francis Newdigate of Arbury, and it was mainly through the Colonel's introduction and influence that Mr. Evans became agent also to Lord Aylesford, Lord Lifford, Mr. Bromley Davenport, and several others.

His position cannot be better summed up than in the words of his daughter, writing to Mr. Bray on 30th September, 1859, in regard to some one who had written of her, after the appearance of "Adam Bede," as a "self-educated farmer's daughter."

"My father did not raise himself from being an artisan to be a farmer: he raised himself from being an artisan to be a man whose extensive knowledge in very varied practical departments made his services valued through several counties. He had large knowledge of building, of mines, of plantations, of various branches of valuation and measurement, — of all that is essential to the management of large estates. He was held by those competent to judge as *unique* amongst land agents for his manifold knowledge and experience, which enabled him to save the special fees usually paid by landowners for special opinions on the different questions incident to the proprietorship of land. So far as I am personally concerned, I should not write a stroke to prevent any one, in the zeal of antithetic eloquence, from calling me a tinker's daughter; but if my father is to be mentioned at all, — if he is to be identified with an imaginary character, — my piety towards his memory calls on me to point out to those who are supposed to speak with information what he really achieved in life."

Mr. Evans was also — like Adam Bede — noteworthy for his extraordinary physical strength and determination of character. There is a story told of him, that one day when he was travelling on the top of a coach, down in Kent, a decent woman sitting next him complained that a great hulking sailor on her other side was making himself offensive. Mr. Evans changed places with the woman, and, taking the sailor by the collar, forced him down under the seat, and held him there with an iron hand for the remainder of the stage; and at Griff it is still remembered that the master happening to pass one day whilst a couple of labourers

were waiting for a third to help to move the high heavy ladder used for thatching ricks, braced himself up to a great effort, and carried the ladder alone and unaided from one rick to the other, to the wide-eyed wonder and admiration of his men. With all this strength, however, both of body and of character, he seems to have combined a certain self-distrust, owing perhaps to his early imperfect education, which resulted in a general submissiveness in his domestic relations, more or less portrayed in the character of Mr. Garth.

His second wife was a woman with an unusual amount of natural force, — a shrewd practical person, with a considerable dash of the Mrs. Poyser vein in her. Hers was an affectionate, warm-hearted nature, and her children, on whom she cast "the benediction of her gaze," were thoroughly attached to her. She came of a race of yeomen, and her social position was therefore rather better than her husband's at the time of their marriage. Her family are, no doubt, prototypes of the Dodsons in the "Mill on the Floss." There were three other sisters married and all living in the neighbourhood of Griff, — Mrs. Everard, Mrs. Johnson, and Mrs. Garner, — and probably Mr. Evans heard a good deal about "the traditions in the Pearson family." Mrs. Evans was a very active hard-working woman, but shortly after her last child's birth she became ailing in health, and consequently her eldest girl, Christiana, was sent to school at a very early age, to Miss Lathom's at Attleboro, — a village a mile or two from Griff, — whilst the two younger children spent some part of their time every day at the cottage of a Mrs. Moore, who kept a Dame's school close to Griff gates. The little girl very early became possessed with the

idea that she was going to be a personage in the world; and Mr. Charles Lewes has told me an anecdote which George Eliot related of herself as characteristic of this period of her childhood. When she was only four years old, she recollected playing on the piano, of which she did not know one note, in order to impress the servant with a proper notion of her acquirements and generally distinguished position. This was the time when the love for her brother grew in to the child's affections. She used always to be at his heels, insisting on doing everything he did. She was not in these baby-days in the least precocious in learning. In fact, her half-sister, Mrs. Houghton, — who was some fourteen years her senior, — told me that the child learned to read with some difficulty; but Mr. Isaac Evans says that this was not from any slowness in apprehension, but because she liked playing so much better. Mere sharpness, however, was not a characteristic of her mind. Hers was a large, slow-growing nature; and I think it is at any rate certain that there was nothing of the infant phenomenon about her. In her moral development she showed, from the earliest years, the trait that was most marked in her all through life, — namely, the absolute need of some one person who should be all in all to her, and to whom she should be all in all. Very jealous in her affections, and easily moved to smiles or tears, she was of a nature capable of the keenest enjoyment and the keenest suffering, knowing " all the wealth and all the woe " of a preeminently exclusive disposition. She was affectionate, proud, and sensitive in the highest degree.

The sort of happiness that belongs to this budding time of life — from the age of three to five — is apt to impress itself very strongly on the mem-

ory; and it is this period which is referred to in the Brother and Sister Sonnet, "But were another childhood's world my share, I would be born a little sister there." When her brother was eight years old, he was sent to school at Coventry, and, her mother continuing in very delicate health, the little Mary Ann, now five years of age, went to join her sister at Miss Lathom's school at Attleboro, where they continued as boarders for three or four years, coming occasionally home to Griff on Saturdays. During one of our walks at Witley, in 1880, my wife mentioned to me that what chiefly remained in her recollection about this very early school-life was the difficulty of getting near enough the fire in winter, to become thoroughly warmed, owing to the circle of girls forming round too narrow a fire-place. This suffering from cold was the beginning of a low general state of health: also at this time she began to be subject to fears at night, — "the susceptibility to terror," — which she has described as haunting Gwendolen Harleth in her childhood. The other girls in the school, who were all naturally very much older, made a great pet of the child, and used to call her "little mamma," and she was not unhappy except at nights; but she told me that this liability to have "all her soul become a quivering fear," which remained with her afterwards, had been one of the supremely important influences dominating at times her future life. Mr. Isaac Evans's chief recollection of this period is the delight of the little sister at his home-coming for holidays, and her anxiety to know all that he had been doing and learning. The eldest child, who went by the name of Chrissey, was the chief favourite of the aunts, as she was always neat and tidy, and used to spend a great deal of her

time with them, whilst the other two were inseparable playfellows at home. The boy was his mother's pet, and the girl her father's. They had everything to make children happy at Griff, — a delightful old-fashioned garden, — a pond, and the canal to fish in, — and the farm offices, close to the house, — "the long cow-shed where generations of the milky mothers have stood patiently, — the broad-shouldered barns where the old-fashioned flail once made resonant music," and where butter-making and cheese-making were carried on with great vigour by Mrs. Evans.

Anyone, about this time, who happened to look through the window on the left-hand side of the door of Griff house, would have seen a pretty picture in the dining-room on Saturday evenings after tea. The powerful middle-aged man with the strongly marked features sits in his deep leather-covered arm-chair, at the right-hand corner of the ruddy fireplace, with the head of "the little wench" between his knees. The child turns over the book with pictures that she wishes her father to explain to her, — or that perhaps she prefers explaining to him. Her rebellious hair is all over her eyes, much vexing the pale, energetic mother, who sits on the opposite side of the fire, cumbered with much service, letting no instant of time escape the inevitable click of the knitting-needles, — accompanied by epigrammatic speech. The elder girl, prim and tidy, with her work before her, is by her mother's side; and the brother, between the two groups, keeps assuring himself by perpetual search that none of his favourite means of amusement are escaping from his pockets. The father is already very proud of the astonishing and growing intelligence of his little girl. From a very early

age he has been in the habit of taking her with him in his drives about the neighbourhood, "standing between her father's knees as he drove leisurely," so that she has drunk in knowledge of the country and of country folk at all her pores. An old-fashioned child, already living in a world of her own imagination, impressible to her finger-tips, and willing to give her views on any subject.

The first book that George Eliot read, so far as I have been able to ascertain, was a little volume published in 1822, entitled "The Linnet's Life," which she gave to me in the last year of her life, at Witley. It bears the following inscription, written some time before she gave it to me: —

"This little book is the first present I ever remember having received from my father. Let any one who thinks of me with some tenderness after I am dead, take care of this book for my sake. It made me very happy when I held it in my little hands, and read it over and over again; and thought the pictures beautiful, especially the one where the linnet is feeding her young."

It must, I think, have been very shortly after she received this present, that an old friend of the family, who was in the habit of coming as a visitor to Griff from time to time, used occasionally to bring a book in his hand for the little girl. I very well remember her expressing to me deep gratitude for this early ministration to her childish delights; and Mr. Burne Jones has been kind enough to tell me of a conversation with George Eliot about children's books, when she also referred to this old gentleman's kindness. They were agreeing in disparagement of some of the books that the rising generation take their pleasure in, and she recalled the dearth of child-literature in her own

home, and her passionate delight and total absorption in Æsop's Fables (given to her by the aforesaid old gentleman), the possession of which had opened new worlds to her imagination. Mr. Burne Jones particularly remembers how heartily she laughed in recalling her infantine enjoyment of the humour in the fable of Mercury and the Statue-seller. Having so few books at this time, she read them again and again, until she knew them by heart. One of them was a Joe Miller jest-book, with the stories from which she used greatly to astonish the family circle. But the beginning of her serious reading-days did not come till later. Meantime her talent for observation gained a glorious new field for employment in her first journey from home, which took place in 1826. Her father and mother took her with them on a little trip into Derbyshire and Staffordshire, where she saw Mr. Evans's relations, and they came back through Lichfield, sleeping at the "Swan."[1] They were away only a week, from the 18th to the 24th of May; but "what time is little" to an imaginative, observant child of seven on her first journey? About this time a deeply felt crisis occurred in her life, as her brother had a pony given to him, to which he became passionately attached. He developed an absorbing interest in riding, and cared less and less to play with his sister. The next important event happened in her eighth or ninth year, when she was sent to Miss Wallington's school at Nuneaton, with her sister. This was a much larger school than Miss Lathom's, — there being some thirty girls, boarders. The principal governess was Miss Lewis, who became then, and remained for many years after, Mary Ann

[1] See *post*, Journal, Aug. 25, 1859, — chap. ix.

Evans's most intimate friend and principal correspondent; and I am indebted to the letters addressed to her from 1836 to 1842 for most of the information concerning that period. Books now became a passion with the child: she read everything she could lay hands on, greatly troubling the soul of her mother by the consumption of candles as well as of eyesight in her bedroom. From a subsequent letter, it will be seen that she was "early supplied with works of fiction by those who kindly sought to gratify her appetite for reading."

It must have been about this time that the episode occurred in relation to "Waverley" which is mentioned by Miss Simcox in her article in the June, 1881, number of the "Nineteenth Century Review." It was quite new to me, and as it is very interesting, I give it in Miss Simcox's own words: "Somewhere about 1827 a friendly neighbour lent 'Waverley' to an elder sister of little Mary Ann Evans. It was returned before the child had read to the end, and in her distress at the loss of the fascinating volume, she began to write out the story as far as she had read it for herself, beginning naturally where the story begins with Waverley's adventures at Tully Veolan, and continuing until the surprised elders were moved to get her the book again." Miss Simcox has pointed out the reference to this in the motto of the 57th chapter of "Middlemarch": —

"They numbered scarce eight summers when a name
Rose on their souls and stirred such motions there
As thrill the buds and shape their hidden frame
At penetration of the quickening air:
His name who told of loyal Evan Dhu,
Of quaint Bradwardine, and Vich Ian Vor,
Making the little world their childhood knew
Large with a land of mountain, lake, and scaur,

And larger yet with wonder, love, belief
Toward Walter Scott, who living far away
Sent them this wealth of joy and noble grief.
The book and they must part, but day by day,
In lines that thwart like portly spiders ran
They wrote the tale, from Tully Veolan."

Miss Simcox also mentions that "Elia divided her childish allegiance with Scott, and she remembered feasting with singular pleasure upon an extract in some stray almanac from the essay in commemoration of 'Captain Jackson and his slender ration of Single Gloucester.' This is an extreme example of the general rule that a wise child's taste in literature is sounder than adults generally venture to believe."

We know too, from the "Mill on the Floss," that the "History of the Devil," by Daniel Defoe, was a favourite. The book is still religiously preserved at Griff, with its pictures just as Maggie looked at them. "The Pilgrim's Progress," also, and "Rasselas," had a large share of her affections.

At Miss Wallington's the growing girl soon distinguished herself by an easy mastery of the usual school learning of her years; and there, too, the religious side of her nature was developed to a remarkable degree. Miss Lewis was an ardent evangelical Churchwoman, and exerted a strong influence on her young pupil, whom she found very sympathetically inclined. But Mary Ann Evans did not associate freely with her schoolfellows, and her friendship with Miss Lewis was the only intimacy she indulged in.

On coming home for their holidays the sister and brother began, about this time, the habit of acting charades together before the Griff household and the aunts, who were greatly impressed with the cleverness of the performance; and the girl was

now recognised in the family circle as no ordinary child.

Another epoch presently succeeded on her removal to Miss Franklin's school at Coventry, in her thirteenth year. She was probably then very much what she has described her own Maggie at the age of thirteen: —

"A creature full of eager, passionate longings for all that was beautiful and glad; thirsty for all knowledge; with an ear straining after dreamy music that died away and would not come near to her; with a blind unconscious yearning for something that would link together the wonderful impressions of this mysterious life, and give her soul a sense of home in it. No wonder, when there is this contrast between the outward and the inward, that painful collisions come of it."

In "Our Times" of June, 1881, there is a paper by a lady whose mother was at school with Mary Ann Evans, which gives some interesting particulars of the Miss Franklins.

"They were daughters of a Baptist minister, who had preached for many years in Coventry, and who inhabited during his pastorate a house in the Chapel-yard almost exactly resembling that of Rufus Lyon in 'Felix Holt.' For this venerable gentleman, Miss Evans as a school-girl had a great admiration, and I, who can remember him well, can trace in Rufus Lyon himself many slight resemblances, such as the 'little legs,' and the habit of walking up and down when composing. Miss Rebecca Franklin was a lady of considerable intellectual power, and remarkable for her elegance in writing and conversation, as well as for her beautiful caligraphy. In her classes for English Composition Mary Ann Evans was, from her first

entering the school, far in advance of the rest; and while the themes of the other children were read, criticised, and corrected in class, hers were reserved for the private perusal and enjoyment of the teacher, who rarely found anything to correct. Her enthusiasm for music was already very strongly marked, and her music-master, a much-tried man, suffering from the irritability incident to his profession, reckoned on his hour with her as a refreshment to his wearied nerves, and soon had to confess that he had no more to teach her. In connection with this proficiency in music, my mother recalls her sensitiveness at that time as being painfully extreme. When there were visitors, Miss Evans, as the best performer in the school, was sometimes summoned to the parlour to play for their amusement, and though suffering agonies from shyness and reluctance, she obeyed with all readiness; but on being released, my mother has often known her to rush to her room and throw herself on the floor in an agony of tears. Her schoolfellows loved her as much as they could venture to love one whom they felt to be so immeasurably superior to themselves, and she had playful nicknames for most of them. My mother, who was delicate, and to whom she was very kind, was dubbed by her 'Miss Equanimity.' A source of great interest to the girls, and of envy to those who lived further from home, was the weekly cart which brought Miss Evans new-laid eggs and other delightful produce of her father's farm."

In talking about these early days, my wife impressed on my mind the debt she felt that she owed to the Miss Franklins for their excellent instruction, and she had also the very highest respect for their moral qualities. With her chameleon-

like nature, she soon adopted their religious views with intense eagerness and conviction, although she never formally joined the Baptists or any other communion than the Church of England. She at once, however, took a foremost place in the school, and became a leader of prayer-meetings amongst the girls. In addition to a sound English education, the Miss Franklins managed to procure for their pupils excellent masters for French, German, and music; so that, looking to the lights of those times, the means of obtaining knowledge were very much above the average for girls. Her teachers, on their side, were very proud of their exceptionally gifted scholar; and years afterwards, when Miss Evans came with her father to live in Coventry, they introduced her to one of their friends not only as a marvel of mental power, but also as a person "sure to get something up very soon in the way of clothing club or other charitable undertaking."

This year, 1832, was not only memorable for the change to a new and superior school, but it was also much more memorable to George Eliot for the riot which she saw at Nuneaton, on the occasion of the election for North Warwickshire, after the passing of the great Reform Bill, and which subsequently furnished her with the incidents for the riot in "Felix Holt." It was an event to lay hold on the imagination of an impressionable girl of thirteen, and it is thus described in the local newspaper of 29th December, 1832:—

"On Friday the 21st December, at Nuneaton, from the commencement of the poll till nearly half-past two, the Hemingites [1] occupied the poll;

[1] A Mr. Heming was the Radical candidate.

the numerous plumpers for Sir Eardley Wilmot and the adherents of Mr. Dugdale being constantly interrupted in their endeavours to go to the hustings to give an honest and conscientious vote. The magistrates were consequently applied to, and from the representations they received from all parties, they were at length induced to call in aid a military force. A detachment of the Scots Greys accordingly arrived; but it appearing that that gallant body was not sufficiently strong to put down the turbulent spirit of the mob, a reinforcement was considered by the constituted authorities as absolutely necessary. The tumult increasing, as the detachment of the Scots Greys were called in, the Riot Act was read from the windows of the Newdigate Arms; and we regret to add that both W. P. Inge, Esq., and Colonel Newdigate, in the discharge of their magisterial duties, received personal injuries.

"On Saturday the mob presented an appalling appearance, and but for the forbearance of the soldiery, numerous lives would have fallen a sacrifice. Several of the officers of the Scots Greys were materially hurt in their attempt to quell the riotous proceedings of the mob. During the day the sub-sheriffs at the different booths received several letters from the friends of Mr. Dugdale, stating that they were outside of the town, and anxious to vote for that gentleman, but were deterred from entering it from fear of personal violence. Two or three unlucky individuals, drawn from the files of the military on their approach to the poll, were cruelly beaten and stripped literally naked. We regret to add that one life has been sacrificed during the contest, and that sev-

eral misguided individuals have been seriously injured."

The term ending Christmas, 1835, was the last spent at Miss Franklin's. In the first letter of George Eliot's that I have been able to discover, dated 6th January, 1836, and addressed to Miss Lewis, who was at that time governess in the family of the Rev. L. Harper, Burton Latimer, Northamptonshire, she speaks of her mother having suffered a great increase of pain, and adds: —

"We dare not hope that there will be a permanent improvement. Our anxieties on my mother's account, though so great, have been since Thursday almost lost sight of in the more sudden and consequently more severe trial which we have been called on to endure in the alarming illness of my dear father. For four days we had no cessation of our anxiety; but I am thankful to say that he is now considered out of danger, though very much reduced by frequent bleeding and very powerful medicines."

In the summer of this year, 1836, the mother died, after a long painful illness, in which she was nursed with great devotion by her daughters. It was their first acquaintance with death; and to a highly wrought, sensitive girl of sixteen, such a loss seems an unendurable calamity. "To the old, sorrow is sorrow; to the young it is despair." Many references will be found in the subsequent correspondence to what she suffered at this time, all summed up in the old popular phrase, "We can have but one mother." In the following spring Christiana was married to Mr. Edward Clarke, a surgeon practising at Meriden in Warwickshire. One of Mr. Isaac Evans's most vivid recollections is that on the day of the marriage,

after the bride's departure, he and his younger sister had "a good cry" together over the break up of the old home-life, which of course could never be the same with the mother and the elder sister wanting.

Twenty-three years later we shall find George Eliot writing, on the death of this sister, that she "had a very special feeling for her, — stronger than any third person would think likely." The relation between the sisters was somewhat like that described as existing between Dorothea and Celia in "Middlemarch," — no intellectual affinity, but a strong family affection. In fact, my wife told me that although Celia was not in any sense a portrait of her sister, she "had Chrissey continually in mind" in delineating Celia's character. But we must be careful not to found too much on such *suggestions* of character in George Eliot's books; and this must particularly be borne in mind in the "Mill on the Floss." No doubt the early part of Maggie's portraiture is the best autobiographical representation we can have of George Eliot's own feelings in her childhood, and many of the incidents in the book are based on real experiences of family life, but so mixed with fictitious elements and situations that it would be absolutely misleading to trust to it as a true history. For instance, all that happened in real life between the brother and sister was, I believe, that as they grew up their characters, pursuits, and tastes diverged more and more widely. He took to his father's business, at which he worked steadily, and which absorbed most of his time and attention. He was also devoted to hunting, liked the ordinary pleasures of a young man in his circumstances, and was quite satisfied with the circle of

acquaintance in which he moved. After leaving school at Coventry he went to a private tutor's at Birmingham, where he imbibed strong High Church views. His sister had come back from the Miss Franklins' with ultra-evangelical tendencies, and their differences of opinion used to lead to a good deal of animated argument. Miss Evans, as she now was, could not rest satisfied with a mere profession of faith without trying to shape her own life — and it may be added, the lives around her — in accordance with her convictions. The pursuit of pleasure was a snare; dress was vanity; society was a danger.

"From what you know of her, you will not be surprised that she threw some exaggeration and wilfulness, some pride and impetuosity, even into her self-renunciation: her own life was still a drama for her, in which she demanded of herself that her part should be played with intensity. And so it came to pass that she often lost the spirit of humility by being excessive in the outward act; she often strove after too high a flight, and came down with her poor little half-fledged wings dabbled in the mud. . . . That is the path we all like when we set out on our abandonment of egoism, — the path of martyrdom and endurance, where the palm branches grow, rather than the steep highway of tolerance, just allowance, and self-blame, where there are no leafy honours to be gathered and worn." [1]

After Christiana's marriage the entire charge of the Griff establishment devolved on Mary Ann, who became a most exemplary housewife, learned thoroughly everything that had to be done, and, with her innate desire for perfection, was never

[1] "Mill on the Floss," chap. iii. book iv.

satisfied unless her department was administered in the very best manner that circumstances permitted. She spent a great deal of time in visiting the poor, organising clothing clubs, and other works of active charity. But over and above this, as will be seen from the following letters, she was always prosecuting an active intellectual life of her own. Mr. Brezzi, a well-known master of modern languages at Coventry, used to come over to Griff regularly to give her lessons in Italian and German. Mr. M'Ewen, also from Coventry, continued her lessons in music, and she got through a large amount of miscellaneous reading by herself. In the evenings she was always in the habit of playing to her father, who was very fond of music. But it requires no great effort of imagination to conceive that this life, though full of interests of its own, and the source from whence the future novelist drew the most powerful and the most touching of her creations, was, as a matter of fact, very monotonous, very difficult, very discouraging. It could scarcely be otherwise to a young girl, with a full passionate nature and hungry intellect, shut up in a farmhouse in the remote country. For there was no sympathetic human soul near with whom to exchange ideas on the intellectual and spiritual problems that were beginning to agitate her mind. "You may try, but you can never imagine what it is to have a man's force of genius in you, and yet to suffer the slavery of being a girl." [1] This is a point of view that must be distinctly recognised by any one attempting to follow the development of George Eliot's character, and it will always be corrected by the other point of view which she has made

[1] "Daniel Deronda."

so prominent in all her own writing, — the soothing, strengthening, sacred influences of the home life, the home loves, the home duties. Circumstances in later life separated her from her kindred, but among her last letters it will be seen that she wrote to her brother in May, 1880, that "our long silence has never broken the affection for you which began when we were little ones."[1] — and she expresses her satisfaction in the growing prosperity of himself and all his family. It was a real gratification to her to hear from some Coventry friends that her nephew, the Rev. Frederic Evans, the present Rector of Bedworth, was well spoken of as a preacher in the old familiar places, and in our last summer at Witley we often spoke of a visit to Warwickshire, that she might renew the sweet memories of her child-days. No doubt, the very monotony of her life at Griff, and the narrow field it presented for observation of society, added immeasurably to the intensity of a naturally keen mental vision, concentrating into a focus what might perhaps have become dissipated in more liberal surroundings. And though the field of observation was narrow in one sense, it included very various grades of society. Such fine places as Arbury, and Packington, the seat of Lord Aylesford, where she was being constantly driven by her father, affected the imagination and accentuated the social differences, — differences which had a profound significance for such a sensitive and such an intellectually commanding character, and which left their mark on it.

"No one who has not a strong natural prompting and susceptibility towards such things [the signs and luxuries of ladyhood], and has, at the

[1] See chap. xix.

same time, suffered from the presence of opposite conditions, can understand how powerfully those minor accidents of rank which please the fastidious sense can preoccupy the imagination." [1]

The tone of her mind will be seen from the letters written during the following years; and I remember once, after we were married, when I was urging her to write her autobiography, she said, half sighing, half smiling: "The only thing I should care much to dwell on would be the absolute despair I suffered from of ever being able to achieve anything. No one could ever have felt greater despair, and a knowledge of this might be a help to some other struggler," — adding with a smile, "but, on the other hand, it might only lead to an increase of bad writing."

[1] "Felix Holt," chap. xxxviii.

SUMMARY OF INTRODUCTORY SKETCH

NOVEMBER 22, 1819, TO END OF 1837

Birth at Arbury Farm — Baptism — Character of father — His first marriage and children — Second marriage and children — Removal to Griff — Events at time of birth — Character of country about Griff — Coach communication — Father's position — Anecdotes of father — Character of mother — Mother's family and delicacy — Dame's school — Companionship with brother — Miss Lathom's school at Attleboro — Suffers from fear — Father's pet — Drives with him — First books read — First journey to Staffordshire — Miss Wallington's school at Nuneaton — Miss Lewis, governess — Books read — Religious impressions — Charade acting — Miss Franklin's school at Coventry — Riot at Nuneaton — First letter to Miss Lewis — Mother's illness — Mother's death — Sister Christiana married to Mr. Clarke — Relations with brother — Housekeeper at Griff — Life and studies there.

CHAPTER I

IN the foregoing introductory sketch, I have endeavoured to present the influences to which George Eliot was subjected in her youth, and the environment in which she grew up; I am now able to begin the fulfilment of the promise on the title-page, that the life will be related in her own letters, — or rather in extracts from her own letters, for no single letter is printed entire from the beginning to the end. I have not succeeded in obtaining any between 6th January, 1836, and 18th August, 1838; but from the latter date the correspondence becomes regular, and I have arranged it as a continuous narrative, with the names of the persons to whom the letters are addressed in the margin. The slight thread of narrative or explanation which I have written to elucidate the letters, where necessary, will hereafter occupy an inside margin, so that the reader will see at a glance what is narrative and what is correspondence, and will be troubled as little as possible with marks of quotation or changes of type.

The following opening letter of the series to Miss Lewis describes a first visit to London with her brother: —

Let me tell you, though, that I was not at all delighted with the stir of the great Babel, and the less so, probably, owing to the circumstances attending my visit thither. Isaac and I went alone (that seems rather Irish), and stayed only a week, every day of which we worked hard at seeing sights. I

Letter to Miss Lewis, 18th Aug. 1838.

think Greenwich Hospital interested me more than anything else.

Mr. Isaac Evans himself tells me that what he remembers chiefly impressed her was the first hearing the great bell of St. Paul's. It affected her deeply. At that time she was so much under the influence of religious and ascetic ideas that she would not go to any of the theatres with her brother, but spent all her evenings alone reading. A characteristic reminiscence is that the chief thing she wanted to buy was Josephus's "History of the Jews;" and at the same bookshop where her brother got her this, he bought for himself a pair of hunting sketches. In the same letter, alluding to the marriage of one of her friends, she says: —

For my part, when I hear of the marrying and giving in marriage that is constantly being transacted, I can only sigh for those who are multiplying earthly ties which, though powerful enough to detach their hearts and thoughts from heaven, are so brittle as to be liable to be snapped asunder at every breeze. You will think that I need nothing but a tub for my habitation to make me a perfect female Diogenes; and I plead guilty to occasional misanthropical thoughts, but not to the indulgence of them. Still I must believe that those are happiest who are not fermenting themselves by engaging in projects for earthly bliss, who are considering this life merely a pilgrimage, a scene calling for diligence and watchfulness, not for repose and amusement. I do not deny that there may be many who can partake with a high degree of zest of all the lawful enjoyments the world can offer, and yet live in near communion with their God, — who can warmly love the creature, and yet be careful that the Creator maintains His supremacy in their hearts; but I confess that

in my short experience and narrow sphere of action I have never been able to attain to this. I find, as Dr. Johnson said respecting his wine, total abstinence much easier than moderation. I do not wonder you are pleased with Pascal;[1] his thoughts may be returned to the palate again and again with increasing rather than diminished relish. I have highly enjoyed Hannah More's letters: the contemplation of so blessed a character as hers is very salutary. "That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises," is a valuable admonition. I was once told that there was nothing out of myself to prevent my becoming as eminently holy as St. Paul; and though I think that is too sweeping an assertion, yet it is very certain we are generally too low in our aims, more anxious for safety than sanctity, for place than purity, forgetting that each involves the other, and that, as Doddridge tells us, to rest satisfied with any attainments in religion is a fearful proof that we are ignorant of the very first principles of it. Oh that we could live only for eternity! that we could realise its nearness! I know you do not love quotations, so I will not give you one; but if you do not distinctly remember it, do turn to the passage in Young's "Infidel Reclaimed," beginning, "O vain, vain, vain all else eternity," and do love the lines for my sake.

I really feel for you, sacrificing, as you are, your own tastes and comforts for the pleasure of others, and that in a manner the most trying to rebellious flesh and blood; for I verily believe that in most cases it requires more of a martyr's spirit to endure, with patience and cheerfulness, daily cross-

[1] Given to her as a school prize when she was fourteen: see chap. xviii.

ings and interruptions of our petty desires and pursuits, and to rejoice in them if they can be made to conduce to God's glory and our own sanctification, than even to lay down our lives for the truth.

Letter to Miss Lewis, 6th Nov. 1838.

I can hardly repress a sort of indignation towards second causes. That your time and energies should be expended in ministering to the petty interests of those far beneath you in all that is really elevating, is about as *bienséant* as that I should set fire to a goodly volume to light a match by! I have had a very unsettled life lately, — Michaelmas with its onerous duties and anxieties, much company (for us) and little reading, so that I am ill prepared for corresponding with profit or pleasure. I am generally in the same predicament with books as a glutton with his feast, hurrying through one course that I may be in time for the next, and so not relishing or digesting either; not a very elegant illustration, but the best my organs of ideality and comparison will furnish just now.

I have just begun the life of Wilberforce, and I am expecting a rich treat from it. There is a similarity, if I may compare myself with such a man, between his temptations, or rather *besetments*, and my own, that makes his experience very interesting to me. Oh that I might be made as useful in my lowly and obscure station as he was in the exalted one assigned to him! I feel myself to be a mere cumberer of the ground. May the Lord give me such an insight into what is truly good, that I may not rest contented with making Christianity a mere addendum to my pursuits, or with tacking it as a fringe to my garments! May I seek to be sanctified wholly! My

nineteenth birthday will soon be here (the 22d), — an awakening signal. My mind has been much clogged lately by languor of body, to which I am prone to give way, and for the removal of which I shall feel thankful.

We have had an oratorio at Coventry lately, Braham, Phillips, Mrs. Knyvett, and Mrs. Shaw, — the last, I think, I shall attend. I am not fitted to decide on the question of the propriety or lawfulness of such exhibitions of talent and so forth, because I have no soul for music. "Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth." I am a tasteless person, but it would not cost me any regrets if the only music heard in our land were that of strict worship, nor can I think a pleasure that involves the devotion of all the time and powers of an immortal being to the acquirement of an expertness in so useless (at least in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred) an accomplishment, can be quite pure or elevating in its tendency.

The above remarks on oratorio are the more surprising, because two years later, when Miss Evans went to the Birmingham festival in September, 1840, previous to her brother's marriage, she was affected to an extraordinary degree, so much so that Mrs. Isaac Evans — then Miss Rawlins — told me that the attention of people sitting near was attracted by her hysterical sobbing. And in all her later life music was one of the chiefest delights to her, and especially oratorio.

"Not that her enjoyment of music was of the kind that indicates a great specific talent; it was rather that her sensibility to the supreme excitement of music was only one form of that passionate sensibility which belonged to her whole nature, and made her faults and virtues all merge in each other,

— made her affections sometimes an impatient demand, but also prevented her vanity from taking the form of mere feminine coquetry and device, and gave it the poetry of ambition." [1]

The next two letters, dated from Griff, — February 6th and March 5th, 1839, — are addressed to Mrs. Samuel Evans, a Methodist preacher, the wife of a younger brother of Mr. Robert Evans. They are the more interesting from the fact, which will appear later, that an anecdote related by this aunt during her visit to Griff in 1839 was the germ of "Adam Bede." To what extent this Elizabeth Evans resembled the ideal character of Dinah Morris will also be seen in its place in the history of "Adam Bede."

Letter to Mrs. Samuel Evans, 6th Feb. 1839.

I am so unwilling to believe that you can forget a promise, or to entertain fears respecting your health, that I persuade myself I must have mistaken the terms of the agreement between us, and that I ought to have sent you a letter before I considered myself entitled to one from Wirksworth. However this may be, I feel so anxious to hear of your well-being in every way, that I can no longer rest satisfied without using my only means of obtaining tidings of you. My dear father is not at home to-night, or I should probably have a message of remembrance to give you from him in addition to the good news that he is as well as he has been for the last two years, and even, I think, better, except that he feels more fatigue after exertion of mind or body than formerly. If you are able to fill a sheet, I am sure both uncle and you would in doing so be complying with the precept, "Lift up the hands that hang down, and strengthen the feeble knees." I need not tell you that this is a dry and

[1] "Mill on the Floss," chap. vi. book vi.

thirsty land, and I shall be as grateful to you for a draught from your fresh spring as the traveller in the Eastern desert is to the unknown hand that digs a well for him. "Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel," seems to be my character, instead of that regular progress from strength to strength that marks, even in this world of mistakes, the people that shall in the heavenly Zion stand before God. I shall not only suffer, but be delighted to receive, the word of exhortation, and I beg you not to withhold it. If I did not know how little you need human help, I should regret that my ignorance and want of deep feeling in spiritual things prevent me from suggesting profitable or refreshing thoughts; but I daresay I took care to tell you that my desire for correspondence with you was quite one of self-interest.

I am thankful to tell you that my dear friends here are all well. I have a faint hope that the pleasure and profit I have felt in your society may be repeated in the summer: there is no place I would rather visit than Wirksworth, or the inhabitants of which have a stronger hold on my affections.

In the next letter the touch about Mrs. Fletcher's life is characteristic.

Letter to Mrs. Samuel Evans, 5th March, 1839.

My dear father is just now so plunged in business, and that of a fatiguing kind, that I should put your confidence in my love and gratitude to an unreasonably severe trial if I waited until he had leisure to unite with me in filling a sheet. You were very kind to remember my wish to see Mrs. Fletcher's life: I only desire such a spiritual digestion as has enabled *you* to derive so much benefit from its pe-

rusal. I am truly glad to hear that you are less embarrassed with respect to your congregation, &c., than you were when we saw you. I must protest against your making apologies for speaking of yourself, for nothing that relates to you can be uninteresting to me.

The unprofitableness you lament in yourself, during your visit to us, had its true cause, not in your lukewarmness, but in the little improvement I sought to derive from your society, and in my lack of humility and Christian simplicity, that makes me willing to obtain credit for greater knowledge and deeper feeling than I really possess. Instead of putting my light under a bushel, I am in danger of ostentatiously displaying a false one. You have much too high an opinion, my dear aunt, of my spiritual condition, and of my personal and circumstantial advantages. My soul seems for weeks together completely benumbed; and when I am aroused from this torpid state, the intervals of activity are comparatively short. I am ever finding excuses for this in the deprivation of outward excitement and the small scope I have for the application of my principles, instead of feeling self-abasement under the consciousness that I abuse precious hours of retirement which would be eagerly employed in spiritual exercises by many a devoted servant of God who is struggling with worldly cares and occupations. I feel that my besetting sin is the one of all others most destroying, as it is the fruitful parent of them all, — ambition, a desire insatiable for the esteem of my fellow-creatures. This seems the centre whence all my actions proceed. But you will perhaps remember, my dear aunt, that I do not attach much value to a disclosure of religious feelings,

owing probably to the dominant corruption I have just been speaking of, which "turns the milk of my good purpose all to curd."

On 16th March, 1839, in a letter to Miss Lewis, there is a reference to good spirits, which is of the rarest occurrence all through the correspondence: —

Letter to Miss Lewis, 16th March, 1839.

I am this morning hardly myself, owing to the insuppressible rising of my animal spirits on a deliverance from sick headache; —

and then the letter continues as to the expediency of reading works of fiction, in answer to a question Miss Lewis had asked: —

I put out of the question all persons of perceptions so quick, memories so eclectic and retentive, and minds so comprehensive, that nothing less than omnivorous reading, as Southey calls it, can satisfy their intellectual man; for (if I may parody the words of Scripture without profaneness) they will gather to themselves all facts, and heap unto themselves all ideas. For such persons we cannot legislate. Again, I would put out of the question standard works, whose contents are matter of constant reference, and the names of whose heroes and heroines briefly, and therefore conveniently, describe characters and ideas: such are "Don Quixote," Butler's "Hudibras," "Robinson Crusoe," "Gil Blas," Byron's Poetical Romances, Southey's ditto, &c. Such, too, are Walter Scott's novels and poems. Such allusions as "He is a perfect Dominie Sampson," "He is as industrious in finding out antiquities, and about as successful, as Jonathan Oldbuck," are likely to become so common in books and conversation, that, *always*

providing our leisure is not circumscribed by duty within narrow bounds, we should, I think, qualify ourselves to understand. Shakspeare has a higher claim than this on our attention; but we have need of as nice a power of distillation as the bee, to suck nothing but honey from his pages. However, as in life we must be exposed to malign influences from intercourse with others if we would reap the advantages designed for us by making us social beings, so in books. Having cleared our way of what would otherwise have encumbered us, I would ask why is one engaged in the instruction of youth to read, as a purely conscientious and self-denying performance of duty, works whose value to others is allowed to be doubtful? I can only imagine two shadows of reasons. Either that she may be able experimentally to decide on their desirableness for her pupils, or else that there is a certain power exerted by them on the mind that would render her a more efficient "tutress" by their perusal. I would not depreciate the disinterestedness of those who will make trial of the effect on themselves of a cup suspected poisonous, that they may deter another from risking life; but it appears to me a work of supererogation, since there are enough witnesses to its baneful effect on themselves already to put an end to all strife in the matter. The Scriptural declaration, "As face answereth to face in a glass, so the heart of man to man," will exonerate me from the charge of uncharitableness, or too high an estimation of myself, if I venture to believe that the same causes which exist in my own breast to render novels and romances pernicious, have their counterpart in that of every fellow-creature. I am, I confess, not an impartial member of a jury

in this case; for I owe the culprits a grudge for injuries inflicted on myself. When I was quite a little child, I could not be satisfied with the things around me: I was constantly living in a world of my own creation, and was quite contented to have no companions, that I might be left to my own musings, and imagine scenes in which I was chief actress. Conceive what a character novels would give to these Utopias. I was early supplied with them by those who kindly sought to gratify my appetite for reading, and of course I made use of the materials they supplied for building my castles in the air. But it may be said, "No one ever dreamed of recommending children to read them: all this does not apply to persons come to years of discretion, whose judgments are in some degree matured." I answer that men and women are but children of a larger growth: they are still imitative beings. We cannot (at least those who ever read to any purpose at all), — we cannot, I say, help being modified by the ideas that pass through our minds. We hardly wish to lay claim to such elasticity as retains no impress. We are active beings too. We are each one of the *dramatis personæ* in some play on the stage of Life; hence our actions have their share in the effects of our reading. As to the discipline our minds receive from the perusal of fictions, I can conceive none that is beneficial but may be attained by that of history. It is the merit of fictions to come within the orbit of probability: if unnatural, they would no longer please. If it be said the mind must have relaxation, "Truth is strange, — stranger than fiction." When a person has exhausted the wonders of truth, there is no other resort than fiction; till then, I cannot

imagine how the adventures of some phantom, conjured up by fancy, can be more entertaining than the transactions of real specimens of human nature from which we may safely draw inferences. I daresay Mr. James's "Huguenot" would be recommended as giving an idea of the times of which he writes; but as well may one be recommended to look at landscapes for an idea of English scenery. The real secret of the relaxation talked of is one that would not generally be avowed; but an appetite that wants seasoning of a certain kind cannot be indicative of health. Religious novels are more hateful to me than merely worldly ones: they are a sort of centaur or mermaid, and, like other monsters that we do not know how to class, should be destroyed for the public good as soon as born. The weapons of the Christian warfare were never sharpened at the forge of romance. Domestic fictions, as they come more within the range of imitation, seem more dangerous. For my part, I am ready to sit down and weep at the impossibility of my understanding or barely knowing a fraction of the sum of objects that present themselves for our contemplation in books and in life. Have I, then, any time to spend on things that never existed?

Letter to Miss Lewis, 20th May, 1839.

You allude to the religious, or rather irreligious, contentions that form so prominent a feature in the aspect of public affairs, — a subject, you will perhaps be surprised to hear me say, full of interest to me, and on which I am unable to shape an opinion for the satisfaction of my mind. I think no one feels more difficulty in coming to a decision on controverted matters than myself. I do not mean that I have not preferences; but, however congruous a theory

may be with my notions, I cannot find that comfortable repose that others appear to possess after having made their election of a class of sentiments. The other day Montaigne's motto came to my mind (it is mentioned by Pascal) as an appropriate one for me, — "Que sais-je?" — beneath a pair of balances, though, by the by, it is an ambiguous one, and may be taken in a sense that I desire to reprobate, as well as in a Scriptural one to which I do not refer. I use it in a limited sense as a representation of my oscillating judgment. On no subject do I veer to all points of the compass more frequently than on the nature of the visible Church. I am powerfully attracted in a certain direction, but when I am about to settle there, counter-assertions shake me from my position. I cannot enter into details, but when we are together I will tell you all my difficulties, — that is, if you will be kind enough to listen. I have been reading the new prize essay on "Schism" by Professor Hoppus and Milner's "Church History" since I last wrote to you: the former ably expresses the tenets of those who deny that any form of Church government is so clearly dictated in Scripture as to possess a divine right, and, consequently, to be binding on Christians; the latter, you know, exhibits the views of a moderate Evangelical Episcopalian on the inferences to be drawn from ecclesiastical remains. He equally repudiates the loud assertion of a *jus divinum*, to the exclusion of all separatists from the visible Church, though he calmly maintains the superiority of the evidence in favour of Episcopacy, of a moderate kind both in power and extent of diocese, as well as the benefit of a national establishment. I have been skimming the "Portrait of an English Churchman"

by the Rev. W. Gresley: this contains an outline of the system of those who exclaim of the Anglican Church as the Jews did of their sacred building (that they do it in as reprehensible a spirit I will not be the judge), "the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord" is exclusively theirs; while the authors of the Oxford Tracts go a step farther, and evince by their compliments to Rome, as a dear though erring sister, and their attempts to give a Romish colour to our ordinance, with a very confused and unscriptural statement of the great doctrine of justification, a disposition rather to fraternise with the members of a Church carrying on her brow the prophetical epithets applied by St. John to the Scarlet beast, the mystery of Iniquity, than with pious Nonconformists. It is true they disclaim all this, and that their opinions are seconded by the extensive learning, the laborious zeal, and the deep devotion of those who propagate them; but a reference to facts will convince us that such has generally been the character of heretical teachers. Satan is too crafty to commit his cause into the hands of those who have nothing to recommend them to approbation. According to their dogmas, the Scotch Church and the foreign Protestant Churches, as well as the non-Episcopalians of our own land, are wanting in the essentials of existence as part of the Church.

In the next letter there is the first allusion to authorship, but, from the wording of the sentence, the poem referred to has evidently not been a first attempt.

I send you some doggerel lines, the crude fruit of a lonely walk last evening, when the words of one of our martyrs occurred to me. You must be

acquainted with the idiosyncrasy of my authorship, which is, that my effusions, once committed to paper, are like the laws of the Medes and Persians, that alter not.

Letter to Miss Lewis, 17th July, 1839.

"'*Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle.*'
2 Peter i. 14.

"As o'er the fields by evening's light I stray,
I hear a still small whisper, — Come away;
Thou must to this bright, lovely world soon say
Farewell!

"The mandate I'd obey, my lamp prepare,
Gird up my garments, give my soul to pray'r,
And say to earth, and all that breathe earth's air,
Farewell!

"Thou sun, to whose parental beam I owe
All that has gladden'd me while here below,
Moon, stars, and covenant-confirming bow,
Farewell!

"Ye verdant meads, fair blossoms, stately trees,
Sweet song of birds and soothing hum of bees,
Refreshing odours wafted on the breeze,
Farewell!

"Ye patient servants of creation's Lord,
Whose mighty strength is govern'd by His word,
Who raiment, food, and help in toil afford,
Farewell!

"Books that have been to me as chests of gold,
Which, miserlike, I secretly have told,
And for them love, health, friendship, peace have sold,
Farewell!

"Blest volume! whose clear truth-writ page once known,
Fades not before heaven's sunshine or hell's moan,
To thee I say not, of earth's gifts alone,
Farewell!

"There shall my new-born senses find new joy,
New sounds, new sights my eyes and ears employ,
Nor fear that word that here brings sad alloy,
Farewell!"

I had a dim recollection that my wife had told me that this poem had been printed somewhere. After a long search, I found it in the "Christian Observer" for Janu-

ary, 1840. The version there published has the two following additional verses, and is signed "M. A. E."

"Ye feebler, freer tribes that people air,
Ye gaudy insects, making buds your lair,
Ye that in water shine and frolic there,
Farewell!

"Dear kindred whom the Lord to me has given,
Must the strong tie that binds us now be riven?
No! say I — only till we meet in heaven,
Farewell!"

The editor of the "Christian Observer" has added this note: "We do not often add a note to a poem: but if St. John found no temple in the New Jerusalem, neither will there be any need of a Bible; for we shall not then see through a glass darkly, — through the veil of Sacraments of the written Word, — but face to face. The Bible is God's gift, but not for heaven's use. Still on the very verge of heaven we may cling to it, after we have bid farewell to everything earthly; and this perhaps is what M. A. E. means."

In the following letter we already see the tendency to draw illustrations from science: —

Letter to Miss Lewis, 4th Sept. 1839.

I have lately led so unsettled a life, and have been so desultory in my employments, that my mind, never of the most highly organised genus, is more than usually chaotic; or rather it is like a stratum of conglomerated fragments, that shows here a jaw and rib of some ponderous quadruped, there a delicate alto-relievo of some fern-like plant, tiny shells, and mysterious nondescripts encrusted and united with some unvaried and uninteresting but useful stone. My mind presents just such an assemblage of disjointed specimens of history, ancient and modern; scraps of poetry picked up from Shakspeare, Cowper, Wordsworth, and Milton; newspaper topics; morsels of Addison and Bacon,

Latin verbs, geometry, entomology, and chemistry; Reviews and metaphysics, — all arrested and petrified and smothered by the fast-thickening every-day accession of actual events, relative anxieties, and household cares and vexations. How deplorably and unaccountably evanescent are our frames of mind, as various as the forms and hues of the summer clouds! A single word is sometimes enough to give an entirely new mould to our thoughts, — at least I find myself so constituted; and therefore to me it is pre-eminently important to be anchored within the veil, so that outward things may be unable to send me adrift. Write to me as soon as you can. Remember Michaelmas is coming, and I shall be engaged in matters so nauseating to me that it will be a charity to console me; to reprove and advise me no less.

I have emerged from the slough of domestic troubles, or rather, to speak quite clearly, "malheurs de cuisine," and am beginning to take a deep breath in my own element, though with a mortifying consciousness that my faculties have become superlatively obtuse during my banishment from it. I have been so self-indulgent as to possess myself of Wordsworth at full length, and I thoroughly like much of the contents of the first three vols., which I fancy are only the low vestibule of the three remaining ones. I never before met with so many of my own feelings expressed just as I could like them. The distress of the lower classes in our neighbourhood is daily increasing from the scarcity of employment for weavers, and I seem sadly to have handcuffed myself by unnecessary expenditure. To-day is my 20th birthday.

Letter to Miss Lewis, 22d Nov. 1839.

This allusion to Wordsworth is interesting, as it entirely expresses the feeling she had to him up to the day of her death. One of the very last books we read together at Cheyne Walk was Mr. Frederick Myers's "Wordsworth" in the "English Men of Letters," which she heartily enjoyed.

Letter to Miss Lewis, 23d March, 1840.

I have just received my second lesson in German.

Letter to Miss Lewis, 2d May, 1840. Friday evening.

I know you will be glad to think of me as thoroughly employed, as indeed I am to an extent that makes me fear I shall not be able to accomplish everything well. I have engaged, if possible, to complete the Chart,[1] the plan of which I sketched out last year, by November next, and I am encouraged to believe that it will answer my purpose to print it. The profits arising from its sale, if any, will go partly to Attleboro Church, and partly to a favourite object of my own. Mrs. Newdigate is very anxious that I should do this, and she permits me to visit her library when I please, in search of any books that may assist me. Will you ask Mr. Craig what he considers the best authority for the date of the apostolical writings? I should like to carry the Chart down to the Reformation, if my time and resources will enable me to do so. We are going to have a clothing club, the arrangement and starting of which are left to me. I am ashamed to run the risk of troubling you, but I should be very grateful if you could send me an abstract of the rules by which yours is regulated.

Our house is now, and will be for the next two months, miserably noisy and disorderly with the musical operations of masons, carpenters, and

[1] Of ecclesiastical history.

painters. You know how abhorrent all this is to my tastes and feelings, taking all the spice out of my favourite little epithet, "this working-day world": I can no longer use it figuratively. How impressive must the gradual rise of Solomon's Temple have been! each prepared mass of virgin marble laid in reverential silence. I fancy Heber has compared it to the growth of a palm. Your nice miniature chart, which I shall carefully treasure up, has quite satisfied me that Dr. Pearson at least has not realised my conceptions, though it has left me still dubious as to my own power of doing so. I will just (if you can bear to hear more of the matter) give you an idea of the plan, which may have partly faded from your memory. The series of perpendicular columns will successively contain the Roman emperors with their dates, the political and religious state of the Jews, the Bishops, remarkable men and events in the several Churches, a column being devoted to each of the chief ones, the aspect of heathenism and Judaism towards Christianity, the chronology of the Apostolical and Patristical writings, schisms and heresies, General Councils, eras of corruption (under which head the remarks would be general), and I thought possibly an application of the apocalyptic prophecies, which would merely require a few figures and not take up room. I think there must be a break in the Chart, after the establishment of Christianity as the religion of the empire, and I have come to a determination not to carry it beyond the first acknowledgment of the supremacy of the Pope by Phocas in 606, when Mohammedanism became a besom of destruction in the hand of the Lord, and completely altered the aspect of ecclesiastical his-

Letter to Miss Lewis, 21st May, 1840.

tory. So much for this at present airy project, about which I hope never to tease you more. Mr. Harper [1] lent me a little time ago a work by the Rev. W. Gresley, begging me to read it, as he thought it was calculated to make me a proselyte to the opinions it advocates. I had skimmed the book before ("Portrait of an English Churchman"), but I read it attentively a second time, and was pleased with the spirit of piety that breathes throughout. His last work is one in a similar style ("The English Citizen"), which I have cursorily read; and as they are both likely to be seen by you, I want to know your opinion of them. Mine is this: that they are sure to have a powerful influence on the minds of small readers and shallow thinkers, as from the simplicity and clearness with which the author, by his *beau idéal* characters, enunciates his sentiments, they furnish a magazine of easily wielded weapons for *morning-calling* and *evening-party* controversialists, as well as that really honest minds will be inclined to think they have found a resting-place amid the footballing of religious parties. But it appears to me that there is unfairness in arbitrarily selecting a train of circumstances and a set of characters as a development of a class of opinions. In this way we might make atheism appear wonderfully calculated to promote social happiness. I remember, as I daresay you do, a very amiable atheist depicted by Bulwer in "Devereux;" and for some time after the perusal of that book, which I read seven or eight years ago,[2] I was considerably shaken by the impression that religion was not a requisite to moral excellence.

[1] The Squire of Coton.

[2] When she would be thirteen years old.

Have you not alternating seasons of mental stagnation and activity? — just such as the political economists say there must be in a nation's pecuniary condition, — all one's precious specie, time, going out to procure a stock of commodities, while one's own manufactures are too paltry to be worth vending. I am just in that condition, — partly, I think, owing to my not having met with any steel to sharpen my edge against for the last three weeks. I am going to read a volume of the Oxford Tracts and the "Lyra Apostolica": the former I almost shrink from the labour of conning, but the other I confess I am attracted towards by some highly poetical extracts that I have picked up in various quarters. I have just bought Mr. Keble's "Christian Year," a volume of sweet poetry that perhaps you know. The fields of poesy look more lovely than ever, now I have hedged myself in the geometrical regions of fact, where I can do nothing but draw parallels and measure differences in a double sense.

[1] I will only hint that there seems a probability of my being an unoccupied damsel, of my being severed from all the ties that have hitherto given my existence the semblance of a usefulness beyond that of making up the requisite quantum of animal matter in the universe. A second important intimation respecting my worthy self is one that, I confess, I impart without one sigh, though perhaps you will think my callousness discreditable. It is that Seeley & Burnside have just published a Chart of Ecclesiastical History, doubtless giving to my airy vision a local habitation and a

Letter to Miss Lewis, 26th May, 1840.

[1] Written probably in view of her brother's marriage.

name. I console all my little regrets by thinking that what is thus evidenced to be a desideratum has been executed much better than if left to my slow fingers and slower head. I fear I am laboriously doing nothing, for I am beguiled by the fascination that the study of languages has for my capricious mind. I could e'en give myself up to making discoveries in the world of words.

May I trouble you to procure for me an Italian book recommended by Mr. Brezzi, Silvio Pellico's "Le mie Prigioni" — if not, "Storia d'Italia"? If they are cheap, I should like both.

Letter to Miss Lewis in London, Whit-Wednesday, June, 1840.

I shall have, I hope, a little trip with my father next week into Derbyshire, and this "lark" will probably be beneficial to me; so that do not imagine I am inviting you to come and hear moaning, when you need all attainable relaxation.

Letter to Miss Lewis, 23d June, 1840.

Your letter greeted me last night on my arrival from Staffordshire. The prospectus of Mr. Henslow's work is as marvellous to my ignorant conceptions as the prophecies of the wonders of the steam-engine would have been to some British worthy in the days of Caractacus. I can only gape as he would probably have done. I hope Mr. H. has not imitated certain show-keepers, who give so exaggerated a representation of their giantess, on the outside, that the spectators have disappointment for their cash within.

If I do not see you, how shall I send your "Don Quixote," which I hope soon to finish? I have been sadly interrupted by other books that have taken its scanty allowance of time, or I should have made better haste with it. Will you try to get me Spenser's "Faery Queen"? the cheapest

edition, with a glossary, which is quite indispensable, together with a clear and correct type. I have had some treats on my little excursion, not the least of which was the gazing on some — albeit the smallest — of the "everlasting hills," and on those noblest children of the earth — fine healthy trees — as independent in their beauty as virtue: set them where you will, they adorn and need not adornment. Father indulged me with a sight of Ashborne Church, the finest mere parish church in the kingdom, — in the *interior;* of Alton Gardens, where I saw actually what I have often seen mentally, — the bread-fruit tree, the fan-palm, and the papyrus; and last, of Lichfield Cathedral, where, besides the exquisite architectural beauties both external and internal, I saw Chantrey's famous monument of the Sleeping Children. There is a tasteless monument to the learned and brilliant female pedant of Lichfield, Miss Seward, with a poor epitaph by Sir Walter Scott. In the town we saw a large monument erected to Johnson's memory, showing his Titanic body, in a sitting posture, on the summit of a pedestal which is ornamented with bas-reliefs of three passages in his life: his penance in Uttoxeter Market, his chairing on the shoulders of his schoolmates, and his listening to the preaching of Sacheverel. The statue is opposite to the house in which Johnson was born, — altogether inferior to that in St. Paul's, which shook me almost as much as a real glance from the literary monarch. I am ashamed to send you so many ill-clothed nothings. My excuse shall be a state of head that calls for four leeches before I can attack Mrs. Somerville's "Connection of the Physical Sciences."

Letter to Miss Lewis, July, Monday morning, 1840.

I write with a very tremulous hand, as you will perceive: both this, and many other defects in my letter, are attributable to a very mighty cause, — no other than the boiling of currant jelly! I have had much of this kind of occupation lately, and I grieve to say I have not gone through it so cheerfully as the character of a Christian who professes to do *all*, even the most trifling, duty as the Lord demands. My mind is consequently run all wild, and bears nothing but *dog-roses*. I am truly obliged to you for getting me Spenser. How shall I send to you "Don Quixote," which I have quite finished?

Letter to Miss Lewis, 8th July, 1840.

I believe it is decided that father and I should leave Griff and take up our residence somewhere in the neighbourhood of Coventry, if we can obtain a suitable house; and this is at present a matter of anxiety. So you see I am likely still to have a home where I can independently welcome you. I am really so plunged in an abyss of books, preserves, and sundry *important trivialities*, that I must send you this bare proof that I have not cast the remembrance of you to a dusty corner of my heart. Ever believe that "my heart is as thy heart," that you may rely on me as a second self, and that I shall, with my usual selfishness, lose no opportunity of gratifying my duplicate.

Letter to Miss Lewis, 12th Aug. 1840.

The Epistle to the Colossians is pre-eminently rich in the colouring with which it portrays the divine fulness contained in the Saviour, contrasted with the beggarly elements that a spirit of self-righteousness would, in some way, mingle with the light of life, the filthy rags it would tack round the "fine raiment"

of His righteousness. I have been reading it in connection with a train of thought suggested by the reading of "Ancient Christianity and the Oxford Tracts," by Isaac Taylor, one of the most eloquent, acute, and pious of writers. Five numbers only have yet appeared. Have you seen them? If not, I should like to send you an abstract of his argument. I have gulped it (pardon my coarseness) in a most reptile-like fashion. I must *chew* it thoroughly to facilitate its assimilation with my mental frame. When your pupils can relish Church history, I venture to recommend the Chart lately published by Seeley & Burnside, — far superior in conception to mine, as being more compendious, yet answering the purpose of presenting epochs as nuclei round which less important events instinctively cluster.

Mrs. John Cash of Coventry, who was then Miss Mary Sibree, daughter of a Nonconformist minister there, and whose acquaintance Miss Evans made a year or two later in Coventry, writes in regard to this book of Isaac Taylor's: "In her first conversations with my father and mother, they were much interested in learning in what high estimation she held the writings of Isaac Taylor. My father thought *she was a little disappointed on hearing that he was a Dissenter. She particularly enjoyed his 'Saturday Evening,' and spoke in years after to me of his 'Physical Theory of Another Life,' as exciting thought and leading speculation further than he would have desired. When his 'Ancient Christianity' was published in numbers, Miss Evans took it in, and kindly forwarded the numbers to us. From the impression made on my own mind by unfavourable facts about 'The Fathers,' and from her own subsequent references to this work, I am inclined to think it had its influence in unsettling her views of Christianity."*

I have thought of you as *the* one who has ever shown herself so capable of consideration for my weakness and sympathy in my warm and easily fastened affections. My imagination is an enemy that must be cast down ere I can enjoy peace or exhibit uniformity of character. I know not which of its caprices I have most to dread, — that which incites it to spread sackcloth "above, below, around," or that which makes it "cheat my eye with blear illusion, and beget strange dreams" of excellence and beauty in beings and things of only working-day price. The beautiful heavens that we have lately enjoyed awaken in me an indescribable sensation of exultation in existence, and aspiration after all that is suited to engage an immaterial nature. I have not read very many of Mr. B.'s poems, nor any with much attention. I simply declare my determination not to feed on the broth of literature when I can get strong soup, — such, for instance, as Shelley's "Cloud," the five or six stanzas of which contain more poetic metal than is beat out in all Mr. B.'s pages. You must know I have had bestowed on me the very pretty cognomen of Clematis, which, in the floral language, means mental beauty. I cannot find in my heart to refuse it, though, like many other appellations, it has rather the appearance of a satire than a compliment. *Addio!* I will send your floral name in my next, when I have received my dictionary. My hand and mind are wearied with writing four pages of German and a letter of business.

Letter to Miss Lewis, 17th Sept. 1840.

Letter to Miss Lewis, 1st Oct. 1840.

My dear Veronica, — which, being interpreted, is fidelity in friendship, — Last week I was absent from home from Wednesday to Saturday, in quest of the "coy

maiden" Pleasure — at least nominally so, the real motive being rather to gratify another's feeling.[1] I heard the "Messiah" on Thursday morning at Birmingham, and some beautiful selections from other oratorios of Handel and Haydn on Friday. With a stupid, drowsy sensation, produced by standing sentinel over damson cheese and a warm stove, I cannot do better than ask you to read, if accessible, Wordsworth's short poem on the "Power of Sound," with which I have just been delighted. I have made an alteration in my plans with Mr. Brezzi, and shall henceforward take Italian and German alternately, so that I shall not be liable to the consciousness of having imperative employment for every interstice of time. There seems a greater affinity between German and my mind than Italian, though less new to me, possesses.

I am reading Schiller's "Maria Stuart," and Tasso.

I was pleased with a little poem I learnt a week or two ago in German; and as I want you to like it, I have just put the idea it contains into English doggerel, which quite fails to represent the beautiful simplicity and nature of the original, but yet, I hope, will give you sufficiently its sense to screen the odiousness of the translation *Eccola:* —

QUESTION AND ANSWER

"'Where blooms, O my father, a thornless rose?'
'That can I not tell thee, my child;
Not one on the bosom of earth e'er grows,
But wounds whom its charms have beguiled.'

'Would I'd a rose on my bosom to lie,
But I shrink from the piercing thorn:
I long, but I dare not its point defy;
I long, and I gaze forlorn.'

[1] Visit to Miss Rawlins, her brother's *fiancée*.

'Not so, O my child — round the stem again
Thy resolute fingers entwine;
Forego not the joy for its sister, pain —
Let the rose, the sweet rose, be thine.'"

Would not a parcel reach you by railway?

This is the first allusion to the new means of locomotion, which would, no doubt, be attracting much interest in the Griff household, as valuation was a large part of Mr. Evans's business. Long years after, George Eliot wrote: —

"Our midland plains have never lost their familiar expression and conservative spirit for me; yet at every other mile, since I first looked on them, some sign of world-wide change, some new direction of human labour, has wrought itself into what one may call the speech of the landscape. . . . There comes a crowd of burly navvies with pickaxes and barrows, and while hardly a wrinkle is made in the fading mother's face or a new curve of health in the blooming girl's, the hills are cut through, or the breaches between them spanned, we choose our level, and the white steam-pennon flies along it."

Letter to Miss Lewis, 27th Oct. 1840.

My only reason for writing is to obtain a timely promise that you will spend your holidays chiefly with me, that we may once more meet among scenes which, now I am called on to leave them, I find to have *grown in* to my affections. Carlyle says that to the artisans of Glasgow the world is not one of blue skies and a green carpet, but a world of copperas-fumes, low cellars, hard wages, "striking," and whiskey; and if the recollection of this picture did not remind me that gratitude should be my reservoir of feeling, that into which all that comes from above or around should be received as a source of fertilisation for my soul, I should give a lachry-

mose parody of the said description, and tell you all-seriously what I now tell you playfully, that mine is too often a world such as Wilkie can so well paint, — a walled-in world furnished with all the details which he remembers so accurately, and the least interesting part thereof is often what I suppose must be designated the intelligent; but I deny that it has even a comparative claim to the appellation, for give me a three-legged stool, and it will call up associations — moral, poetical, mathematical — if I do but ask it, while some human beings have the odious power of contaminating the very images that are enshrined as our soul's arcana. Their baleful touch has the same effect as would a uniformity in the rays of light, — it turns all objects to pale-lead colour. Oh, how luxuriously joyous to have the wind of heaven blow on one after being *stived* in a human atmosphere, — to feel one's heart leap up after the pressure that Shakspeare so admirably describes: "When a man's wit is not seconded by the forward chick understanding, it strikes a man as dead as a large reckoning in a small room." But it is time I check this Byronic invective, and, in doing so, I am reminded of Corinne's, or rather Oswald's, reproof, — "La vie est un *combat,* pas un *hymne.*" We should aim to be like a plant in the chamber of sickness, — dispensing purifying air even in a region that turns all pale its verdure, and cramps its instinctive propensity to expand. Society is a wide nursery of plants, where the hundreds decompose to nourish the future ten, after giving collateral benefits to their contemporaries destined for a fairer garden. An awful thought! one so heavy that if our souls could once sustain its whole weight, or rather if its whole weight were once to

drop on them, they would break and burst their tenements. How long will this continue? The cry of the martyrs heard by St. John finds an echo in every heart that, like Solomon's, groans under "the outrage and oppression with which earth is filled." Events are now so momentous, and the elements of society in so chemically critical a state, that a drop seems enough to change its whole form.

I am reading Harris's "Great Teacher," and am *innig bewegt*, as a German would say, by its stirring eloquence, which leaves you no time or strength for a cold estimate of the writer's strict merits. I wish I could read some extracts to you. Isaac Taylor's work is not yet complete. When it is so, I hope to reperuse it. Since I wrote to you I have had Aimé Martin's work, "L'Éducation des Mères," lent to me, and I have found it to be the real Greece whence "Woman's Mission" has only imported to us a few marbles — but! Martin is a *soi-disant* rational Christian, if I mistake him not. I send you an epitaph which he mentions on a tomb in Paris, — that of a mother: "Dors en paix, O ma mère; ton fils t'obéira toujours." I am reading eclectically Mrs. Hemans's poems, and venture to recommend to your perusal, if unknown to you, one of the longest ones, — "The Forest Sanctuary." I can give it my pet adjective, — Exquisite.

I have adopted as my motto, — "*Certum pete finem*," — Seek a sure end.[1]

Letter to Miss Lewis, 5th Dec. 1840.

Come when you would best like to do so: if my heart beat at all at the time, it will be with a more rapid motion than the general, from the joy of seeing you.

[1] By a curious coincidence, when she became Mrs. Cross, this actually was her motto.

I cannot promise you more than calmness when that flush is past, for I am aweary, aweary—longing for rest, which seems to fly from my very anticipations. But this wrought-up sensitiveness which makes me shrink from all contact is, I know, not for communication or sympathy, and is, from that very character, a kind of trial best suited for me. Whatever tends to render us ill-contented with ourselves, and more earnest aspirants after perfect truth and goodness, is gold, though it come to us all molten and burning, and we know not our treasure until we have had long smarting.

Letter to Miss Lewis, 21st Dec. 1840.

It is impossible, to me at least, to be poetical in cold weather. I understand the Icelanders have much national poetry, but I guess it was written in the neighbourhood of the boiling springs. I will promise to be as cheerful and as Christmas-like as my rickety body and chameleon-like spirits will allow. I am about to commence the making of mince-pies, with all the interesting sensations characterising young enterprise or effort.

Letter to Miss Lewis, 27th Jan. 1841.

Happily, the moody, melancholy temperament has some counterbalancing advantages to those of the sanguine: it *does* sometimes meet with results more favourable than it expected, and by its knack of imagining the pessimus, cheats the world of its power to disappoint. The very worm-like originator of this coil of sentiment is the fact that you write more cheerfully of yourself than I had been thinking of you, and that *ergo* I am pleased.

Letter to Miss Lewis, 11th Feb. 1841.

On Monday and Tuesday my father and I were occupied with the sale of furniture at our new house: it is probable that we shall migrate thither in a month.

I shall be incessantly hurried until after our departure, but at present I have to be grateful for a smooth passage through contemplated difficulties. Sewing is my staple article of commerce with the hard trader Time. Now the wind has veered to the south I hope to do much more, and that with greater zest than I have done for many months — I mean of all kinds.

I have been reading the three volumes of the "Life and Times of Louis the Fourteenth," and am as eagerly waiting for the fourth and last as any voracious novel-reader for Bulwer's last. I am afraid I am getting quite martial in my spirit, and, in the warmth of my sympathy for Turenne and Condé, losing my hatred of war. Such a conflict between *individual* and *moral* influence is no novelty. But certainly war, though the heaviest scourge with which the divine wrath against sin is manifested in Time, has been a necessary vent for impurities and a channel for tempestuous passions that must have otherwise made the whole earth, like the land of the devoted Canaanites, to vomit forth the inhabitants thereof. Awful as such a sentiment appears, it seems to me that in the present condition of man (and I do not mean this in the sense that Cowper does), such a purgation of the body politic is probably essential to its health. A foreign war would soon put an end to our national humours, that are growing to so alarming a head.

What do you think of the Progress of Architecture as a subject for Poetry?

Letter to Miss Lewis, 8th March, 1841.

I am just about to set out on a purchasing expedition to Coventry: you may therefore conceive that I am full of little plans and anxieties, and will understand

why I should be brief. I hope by the close of next week that we and our effects shall be deposited at Foleshill, and until then and afterwards I shall be fully occupied, so that I am sure you will not expect to hear from me for the next six weeks. One little bit of unreasonableness you must grant me, — the request for a letter from yourself within that time.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER I

AUGUST 18, 1838, TO MARCH 8, 1841

Letters to Miss Lewis — First visit to London — Religious asceticism — Pascal — Hannah More's letters — Young's "Infidel Reclaimed" — Michaelmas visitors — Life of Wilberforce — Nineteenth birthday — Oratorio at Coventry — Religious objections to music — Letters to Mrs. Samuel Evans — Religious reflections — Besetting sin, ambition — Letters to Miss Lewis — Objections to fiction reading — Religious contentions on the nature of the visible Church — First poem — Account of books read and studies pursued — Wordsworth — Twentieth birthday — German begun — Plan of Chart of Ecclesiastical History — Religious controversies — Oxford Tracts — "Lyra Apostolica" — "Christian Year" — Chart of Ecclesiastical History forestalled — Italian begun — Trip to Derbyshire and Staffordshire — "Don Quixotê" — Spenser's "Faery Queen" — Mrs. Somerville's "Connection of the Physical Sciences" — Dislike of housekeeping work — Removal to Coventry decided — "Ancient Christianity and the Oxford Tracts," by Isaac Taylor, and Mrs. John Cash's impression of its effect — Determination not to feed on the broth of literature — Visit to Birmingham to hear "Messiah" — Reading Schiller's "Maria Stuart" and Tasso — Translation of German poem — Depression of surroundings at Griff — Reading Harris's "Great Teacher," Aimé Martin's "L'Éducation des Mères," and Mrs. Hemans's Poems — Buying furniture at new house — Sewing — Reading "Life and Times of Louis XIV." — Removal to Foleshill Road, Coventry.

CHAPTER II

NEW circumstances now created a change almost amounting to a revolution in Miss Evans's life. Mr. Isaac Evans, who had been associated for some time with his father in the land agency business, married, and it was arranged that he should take over the establishment at Griff. This led to the removal in March, 1841, of Mr. Robert Evans and his daughter to a house on the Foleshill Road, in the immediate neighbourhood of Coventry. The house is still standing, although considerably altered, — a semi-detached house with a good bit of garden round it, and from its upper windows a wide view over the surrounding country, the immediate foreground being unfortunately, however, disfigured by the presence of mills and chimneys. It is town life now instead of country life, and we feel the effects at once in the tone of the subsequent letters. The friendships now formed with Mr. and Mrs. Bray and Miss Sara Hennell particularly, and the being brought within reach of a small circle of cultivated people generally, render this change of residence an exceedingly important factor in George Eliot's development. It chanced that the new house was next door to Mrs. Pears, a sister of Mr. Bray, and as there had been some acquaintance in days gone by between him and the family at Griff, this close neighbourhood led to an exchange of visits. The following extracts from letters to Miss Lewis show how the acquaintance ripened, and will give some indications of the first impressions of Coventry life: —

Last evening I mentioned you to my neighbour (Mrs. Pears), who is growing into the more precious character of a friend. I have seriously to be thankful for far better health than I have pos-

sessed, I think, for years, and I am imperatively called on to trade diligently with this same talent.

Letter to Miss Lewis, Saturday evening, April, 1841.

I am likely to be more and more busy, if I succeed in a project that is just now occupying my thoughts and feelings. I seem to be tried in a contrary mode to that in which most of my dearest friends are being tutored, — tried in the most dangerous way, — by prosperity. Solomon says, "In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider." It seems to me that a transposition, *vice versâ*, of the admonitions would be equally salutary and just. Truly, as the prophet of Selwyn has told us, "Heaven is formidable in its favours." Not that a wise and grateful reception of blessings obliges us to stretch our faces to the length of one of Cromwell's Barebones; nor to shun that joyous bird-like enjoyment of things (which, though perishable as to their actual existence, will be embalmed to eternity in the precious spices of gratitude) that is distinct from levity and voluptuousness. I am really crowded with engagements just now, and I have added one to the number of my correspondents.

The whole of last week was devoted to a bridesmaid's [1] duties, and each day of this has been partially occupied in paying or receiving visits. I have a calm in sea and sky that I doubt not will erelong be interrupted. This is not our rest, if we are among those for whom there remaineth one, and to pass through life without tribulation (or, as Jeremy Taylor beautifully says, with only such a measure of it as may be compared to an artificial discord in music, which nurses the ear for the returning

Letter to Miss Lewis, April, 1841.

[1] Brother's marriage.

harmony) would leave us destitute of one of the marks that invariably accompany salvation, and of that fellowship in the sufferings of the Redeemer which can alone work in us a resemblance to one of the most prominent parts of His divinely perfect character, and enable us to obey the injunction, "In patience possess your souls." I have often observed how, in secular things, active occupation in procuring the necessaries of life renders the character indifferent to trials not affecting that one object. There is an analogous influence produced in the Christian by a vigorous pursuit of duty, a determination to work while it is day.

Letter to Miss Lewis, 28th April, 1841.

One of the penalties women must pay for modern deference to their intellect is, I suppose, that they must give reasons for their conduct after the fashion of men. The days are past for pleading a woman's reason. The truth is, that the hindrances to my writing have been like the little waves of the brooks that look so lovely just now, — they have arisen one after another close to my side, but when I have looked back I have found the ripples too insignificant to be marked in the distance. My father's longer *séjours* at home than formerly, and multiplied acquaintances and engagements, are really valid excuses for me hitherto, but I do not intend to need them in future; I hope to be a "snapper up of unconsidered" moments. I have just been interrupted by a visit from a lass of fourteen who has despoiled me of half an hour, and I am going out to dinner, so that I cannot follow the famous advice, "Hasten slowly." I suppose that you framed your note on the principle that a sharp and sudden sound is the most rousing, but there are *addenda* about yourself that I want to know,

though I dare not ask for them. I do not feel settled enough to write more at present. How is it that Erasmus could write volumes on volumes and multifarious letters besides, while I, whose labours hold about the same relation to his as an ant-hill to a pyramid or a drop of dew to the ocean, seem too busy to write a few? A most posing query!

Letter to Miss Lewis, Thursday morning, June, 1841.

I have of late felt a depression that has disordered the vision of my mind's eye and made me *alive* to what is certainly a fact (though my imagination when I am in health is an adept at concealing it), that I am *alone* in the world. I do not mean to be so sinful as to say that I have not friends *most* undeservedly kind and tender, and disposed to form a far too favourable estimate of me, but I mean that I have no one who enters into my pleasures or my griefs, no one with whom I can pour out my soul, no one with the same yearnings, the same temptations, the same delights as myself. I merely mention this as the impression that obtrudes itself when my body tramples on its keeper, — (a metaphor borrowed from a menagerie of wild beasts if it should happen to puzzle you!) — mysterious "connection exquisite of distant worlds" that we present! A few drops of steel will perhaps make me laugh at the simple objects that, in gloom and mist, I conjure into stalking apparitions.

Letter to Miss Lewis at Margate, 31st July, 1841.

I am beginning to be interlaced with multiplying ties of duty and affection that, while they render my new home happier, forbid me to leave it on a pleasure-seeking expedition. I think, indeed, that both my heart and limbs would leap to behold

the great and wide sea, — that old ocean on which man can leave no trace.

I have been revelling in Nichol's "Architecture of the Heavens and Phenomena of the Solar System," and have been in imagination winging my flight from system to system, from universe to universe, trying to conceive myself in such a position and with such a visual faculty as would enable me to enjoy what Young enumerates among the novelties of the "Stranger" man when he bursts the shell to

Letter to Miss Lewis, 3d Sept. 1841.

> "Behold an infinite of floating worlds
> Divide the crystal waves of ether pure
> In endless voyage without port."

"Hospitable infinity!" Nichol beautifully says. How should I love to have a thoroughgoing student with me, that we might read together! We might each alternately employ the voice and the fingers, and thus achieve just twice as much as a poor solitary. I am more impressed than ever with a truth beautifully expressed in "Woman's Mission" — "Learning is only so far valuable as it serves to enlarge and enlighten the bounds of conscience." This I believe it eminently does when pursued humbly and piously, and from a belief that it is a solemn duty to cultivate every faculty of our nature so far as primary obligations allow. There is an exhortation of St. Paul's that I should love to take as my motto: "Finally, my brethren, whatsoever things are honest" (you know the continuation), — "if there be *any* virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." I have had to lament lately that mine is not a *hard-working* mind, — it requires frequent rest. I am violently in love with the Italian fashion of repeating an adjective or adverb, and

even noun, to give force to expression: there is so much more fire in it than in our circumlocutory phrases, our dull "verys" and "exceedinglys" and "extremelys." I strongly recommend Hallam to you. I shall read it again if I live. When a sort of haziness comes over the mind, making one feel weary of articulated or written signs of ideas, does not the notion of a less laborious mode of communication, of a perception approaching more nearly to intuition, seem attractive? Nathless, I love words: they are the quoits, the bows, the staves that furnish the gymnasium of the mind. Without them, in our present condition, our intellectual strength would have no implements. I have been rather humbled in thinking that if I were thrown on an uncivilised island, and had to form a literature for its inhabitants from my own mental stock, how very fragmentary would be the information with which I could furnish them! It would be a good mode of testing one's knowledge to set one's self the task of writing sketches of all subjects that have entered into one's studies entirely from the chronicles of memory. The prevalence of misery and want in this boasted nation of prosperity and glory is appalling, and really seems to call us away from mental luxury. Oh to be doing some little toward the regeneration of this groaning, travailing creation! I am supine and stupid,— overfed with favours, while the haggard looks and piercing glance of want and conscious hopelessness are to be seen in the streets.

Letter to Miss Lewis, 1st Oct. 1841.

Is not this a true autumn day? Just the still melancholy that I love, — that makes life and nature harmonise. The birds are consulting about their migrations, the trees are putting on the hectic or the pallid

hues of decay, and begin to strew the ground, that one's very footsteps may not disturb the repose of earth and air, while they give us a scent that is a perfect anodyne to the restless spirit. Delicious autumn! My very soul is wedded to it, and if I were a bird I would fly about the earth seeking the successive autumns.

I am going, I hope, to-day to effect a breach in the thick wall of indifference behind which the denizens of Coventry seem inclined to intrench themselves; but I fear I shall fail.

Letter to Miss Lewis, 2d Nov. 1841.

This probably refers to the first visit paid by Miss Evans to Mr. and Mrs. Bray at their house. They had met in the previous May at Mrs. Pears's; but although they were at once mutually attracted, the acquaintance does not seem to have been immediately prosecuted further. Now, however, any time lost in the beginning was quickly made up, and it is astonishing how rapidly the most intimate relations were formed. Mr. Bray was a ribbon-manufacturer, well-to-do at that time, and had a charming house, Rosehill, with a beautiful lawn and garden, in the outskirts of Coventry. Only a part of his time was occupied with his business, and he had much leisure and opportunity, of which he availed himself, for liberal self-education and culture. His was a robust, self-reliant mind. Already, in 1839, he had published a work on the "Education of the Feelings," viewed from the phrenological standpoint; and in this year, 1841, appeared his most important book, "The Philosophy of Necessity." He always remained a sincere and complete believer in the science of phrenology. He had married Miss Caroline Hennell, sister of the Mr. Charles Hennell who published in 1838 "An Inquiry concerning the Origin of Christianity," — a remarkable book, which was translated into German, Strauss contributing a preface to the translation. It will be seen from subsequent letters how greatly Miss Evans was interested in this book, — how

much she admired it; and the reading of it, combined with the association with her new friends, — with the philosophical speculations of Mr. Bray, and with Mrs. Bray's sympathy in her brother's critical and sceptical standpoint, — no doubt hastened the change in her attitude towards the dogmas of the old religion. In the Analytical Catalogue of Mr. Chapman's publications, issued in 1852, there is an analysis of Hennell's "Inquiry" done by Miss Evans, which may be inserted here, as giving her idea of the book eleven years later: —

"The first edition of this work appeared in 1838, when the present strong current of public opinion in favour of free religious discussion had not yet set in; and it probably helped to generate the tone of thought exhibited in more recent works of the same class, to which circumstances have given a wider fame, — works which, like the above, in considering questions of Biblical criticism and the philosophy of Christianity, combine high refinement, purity of aim, and candour, with the utmost freedom of investigation, and with a popularity of style which wins them the attention not only of the learned but of the practical.

"The author opens his inquiry with a Historical Sketch, extending from the Babylonish Captivity to the end of the first century, the design of which is to show how, abstracting the idea of the miraculous, or any speciality of divine influence, the gradual development of certain elements in Jewish character, and the train of events in Jewish history, contributed to form a suitable nidus for the production of a character and career like that of Jesus, and how the devoted enthusiasm generated by such a career in his immediate disciples rendering it easier for them to modify their ideas of the Messiah than to renounce their belief in their Mas-

ter's Messiahship, — the accession of Gentile converts and the destruction of the last remnant of theocracy necessitating a wider interpretation of Messianic hopes, — the junction of Christian ideas with Alexandrian Platonism, and the decrepitude of Polytheism, combined to associate the name of Jesus, his Messiahship, his death and his resurrection, with a great moral and religious revolution. This historical sketch, which is under the disadvantage of presenting, synthetically, ideas based on a subsequent analysis, is intended to meet the difficulty so often urged, and which might be held to nullify the value of a critical investigation, that Christianity is a fact, for which, if the supposition of a miraculous origin be rejected, no adequate and probable causes can be assigned, and that thus, however defective may be the evidence of the New Testament history, its acceptance is the least difficult alternative.

"In the writer's view, the characteristics of the Essene sect, as traced by Josephus and Philo, justify the supposition that Jesus was educated in their school of philosophy; but with the elevated belief and purity of life which belonged to this sect, he united the ardent patriotic ideas which had previously animated Judas of Galilee, who resisted the Roman authority on the ground that God was the only ruler and lord of the Jews. The profound consciousness of genius, a religious fervour which made the idea of the divine ever present to him, patriotic zeal, and a spirit of moral reform, together with a participation in the enthusiastic belief of his countrymen that the long-predicted exaltation of Israel was at hand, combined to produce in the mind of Jesus the gradual conviction that he was himself the Messiah, with whose reign

that exaltation would commence. He began, as John the Baptist had already done, to announce 'the kingdom of heaven,' — a phrase which, to the Jewish mind, represented the national glorification of Israel; and by his preaching, and the influence of his powerful personality, he won multitudes in Galilee to a participation in his belief that he was the expected son of David. His public entrance into Jerusalem in the guise which tradition associated with the Messiah, when he sanctioned the homage of the multitude, was probably the climax of his confidence that a great demonstration of divine power, in concurrence with popular enthusiasm, would seat him triumphantly on the throne of David. No such result appearing, his views of the divine dispensation with respect to himself began to change, and he felt the presentiment that he must enter on his Messianic reign through the gates of suffering and death. Viewing Jesus as a pretender not only to spiritual but to political power, as one who really expected the subversion of the existing government to make way for his own kingship (though he probably relied on divine rather than on human means), he must necessarily have appeared in a dangerous light to those of his countrymen who were in authority, and who were anxious at any price to preserve public tranquillity in the presence of the Roman power, ready to visit with heavy vengeance any breach of order, and to deprive them of the last remnants of their independence; and hence the motives for his arrest and execution. To account for the belief of the disciples in the resurrection of their Master, — a belief which appears to have been sincere, — the author thinks it necessary to suppose a certain nucleus of fact, and this he finds in the disappear-

ance of the body of Jesus, a point attested by all the four Evangelists. The secret of this disappearance probably lay with Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, who were anxious to avoid implicating themselves with that fermentation of regretful enthusiasm to which a resort of the disciples to the grave might give rise. Animated by a belief in the resurrection, — which, being more harmless in the eyes of the authorities than that in a living Messiah, they were permitted to preach with little molestation, — the zeal of the disciples won many converts; a new impulse was given to their cause by the accession of Paul, who became the chief missionary of the new faith, as construed by himself, to the Gentiles; and the concurrence of the causes indicated above, modifying the early creed of the apostles, and blending it with trains of thought already prevalent, bore along Christianity in its conquest over the minds of men until it became the dominant religion of the Roman world.

"Having sought to show, in this preliminary sketch, that a belief in miracles is not entailed on us by the fact of the early growth of Christianity, the author enters on the inquiry whether the claims of the Evangelical writers on our credence are such as to sustain the miraculous part of their narratives. The answer is in the negative. He discusses, first, the date and credibility of each Gospel, and concludes that while Matthew has many marvellous stories, incongruous in themselves, and not only unsupported but contradicted by the other Evangelists, he nevertheless presents the most comprehensible account of the career of Jesus; that in Mark, evidently more remote in time and circumstances, both from his events and from Jewish

modes of thought, the idea conveyed of Jesus is much vaguer and less explicable; that in Luke there is a still further modification of his character, which has acquired a tinge of asceticism; while in John the style of his teaching is wholly changed, and instead of the graphic parable and the pithy apothegm, he utters long mystical discourses in the style of the first epistle bearing the name of the same Evangelist. Mr. Hennell, however, adheres to the conclusion that the substance of this Gospel came from the apostle John at an advanced age, when both the events of his early manhood and the scenes of his native land lay in the far distance. The writer then enters on a special examination of the Resurrection and Ascension, and the other miracles in the Gospels and the Acts, and inquires how far they are sustained by the Apostolic Epistles. He examines the prophecies of the Old Testament supposed to have been fulfilled in Jesus, and also the predictions of Jesus himself concerning his death and resurrection; and finally, he considers the character, views, and doctrine of Christ. According to him, an impartial study of the conduct and sayings of Jesus, as exhibited in the Gospels, produces the conviction that he was an enthusiast and a revolutionist, no less than a reformer and a moral and religious teacher. Passages are adduced from the Old Testament, and from the Apocryphal and Rabbinical writings, to show that there is scarcely anything absolutely original in the teaching of Jesus; but, in the opinion of the author, he manifests a freedom and individuality in the use of his materials, and a general superiority of tone and selection, which, united with the devotion of his life to what he held the highest purpose, mark him to be of an order

of minds occurring but at rare intervals in the history of our race.

"Shortly after the appearance of this work, it was translated into German, through the instrumentality of Dr. Strauss, who, in the Preface he prefixed to it, says: 'Not sufficiently acquainted with German to read continuously a learned work in that language, the labours of our theologians were only accessible to him' (the author of the 'Inquiry') 'so far as they were written in Latin, or translated into English, or treated of in English writings or periodicals: especially he is unacquainted with what the Germans have effected in the criticism of the Gospels since Schleiermacher's work on Luke, and even the earlier commentators he knows but imperfectly. Only so much the more remarkable is it, however, that both in the principles and in the main results of his investigation, he is on the very track which has been entered on amongst us in recent years. . . . That at certain periods, certain modes of thought lie as it were in the atmosphere, . . . and come to light in the most remote places without perceptible media of communication, is shown, not only by the contents, but by the spirit, of Mr. Hennell's work. No further traces of the ridicule and scorn which characterise his countrymen of the Deistical school; the subject is treated in the earnest and dignified tone of the truth-seeker, not with the rancour of a passionate polemic; we nowhere find him deriving religion from priestcraft, but from the tendencies and wants of human nature. . . . These elevated views, which the learned German of our day appropriates as the fruit of the religious and scientific advancement of his nation, this Englishman, to whom most of the means at our command were

wanting, has been able to educe entirely from himself. . . . An Englishman, a merchant, a man of the world, he possesses, both by nature and by training, the practical insight, the sure tact, which lays hold on realities. The solution of problems over which the German flutters with many circuits of learned formulæ, our English author often succeeds in seizing at one spring. . . . To the learned he often presents things under a surprisingly new aspect; to the unlearned, invariably under that which is the most comprehensible and attractive.' "

The reading of Mr. Hennell's book, which followed close on the first visit to the Brays, had no doubt an important influence on George Eliot's development; but evidently there had been a good deal of half-unconscious preparation beforehand (as indicated by Mrs. Cash's remarks on Isaac Taylor's work in the last chapter), which was greatly stimulated now by the contact with new minds.[1] *The following extract from a letter to Miss Lewis, dated 13th November, 1841, apparently fixes the date of the first acknowledgment by herself that her opinions were undergoing so momentous a change.*

Letter to Miss Lewis, 13th Nov. 1841.

My whole soul has been engrossed in the most interesting of all inquiries for the last few days, and to what result my thoughts may lead, I know not, — possibly to one that will startle you; but my only desire is to know the truth, my only fear to cling to error. I venture to say our love will not decompose under the influence of separation, unless you excommunicate me for differing from you in opinion. Think, — is there any *conceivable* alteration in me that would prevent your coming to me at Christmas? I long to have a friend such as you are, I think I may say, alone to me, to unburthen every thought

[1] See Appendix at end of volume.

and difficulty, — for I am still a solitary, though near a city. But we have the universe to talk with, infinity in which to stretch the gaze of hope, and an all-bountiful, all-wise Creator in whom to confide, — He who has given us the untold delights of which our reason, our emotion, our sensations are the ever-springing sources.

What a pity that while mathematics are indubitable, immutable, and no one doubts the properties of a triangle or a circle, doctrines infinitely important to man are buried in a charnel-heap of bones over which nothing is heard but the barks and growls of contention! "Unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united."

Letter to Miss Lewis, 8th Dec. 1841.

It was impossible for such a nature as Miss Evans's, in the enthusiasm of this first great change, to rest satisfied in compliance with the old forms, and she was so uneasy in an equivocal position that she determined to give up going to church. This was an unforgivable offence in the eyes of her father, who was a churchman of the old school, and nearly led to a family rupture. He went so far as to put into an agent's hands the lease of the house in the Foleshill Road, with the intention of going to live with his married daughter. Upon this, Miss Evans made up her mind to go into lodgings at Leamington, and to try to support herself by teaching. The first letter to Mrs. Bray refers to this incident: —

My guardian angel Mrs. Pears has just sent for me to hear your kind note, which has done my aching limbs a little good. I shall be most thankful for the opportunity of going to Leamington, and Mrs. Pears is willing to go too. There is but *one* woe, that of leaving my dear father, — all else, doleful lodgings, scanty meals, and *gazing-stockism,* are quite

Letter to Mrs. Bray, Jan. 1842.

indifferent to me. Therefore do not fear for me when I am once settled in my home — wherever it may be — and freed from wretched suspense.

Letter to Mrs. Pears, Friday evening, Feb. 1842.

Far from being weary of your dear little Henry, his matin visits are as cheering to me as those of any little bird

"That comes in spite of sorrow,
And at my window bids good-morrow."

We have not, perhaps, been so systematic as a regular tutor and pupil would have been, but we crave indulgence for some laxity. I was really touched that you should think of *me* while among friends more closely linked with you in every way. I was beginning to get used to the conviction that, ivy-like as I am by nature, I must (as we see ivy do sometimes) shoot out into an isolated tree. Never again imagine that you need ask forgiveness for speaking or writing to me on subjects to me more interesting than aught else; on the contrary, believe that I really enjoy conversation of this nature: blank silence and cold reserve are the only bitters I care for in my intercourse with you. I can rejoice in all the joys of humanity, — in all that serves to elevate and purify feeling and action; nor will I quarrel with the million who, I am persuaded, are with me in intention, though our dialects differ. Of course I must desire the ultimate downfall of error, for no error is innocuous; but this assuredly will occur without my proselytising aid, and the best proof of a real love of the truth — that freshest stamp of divinity — is a calm confidence in its intrinsic power to secure its own high destiny, — that of universal empire. Do not fear that I will become a stagnant pool by a self-sufficient determination only to listen to my own echo;

to read the yea, yea on my own side, and be most comfortably deaf to the nay, nay. Would that all rejected *practically* this maxim! To *fear* the examination of any proposition appears to me an intellectual and a moral palsy that will ever hinder the firm grasping of any substance whatever. For my part, I wish to be among the ranks of that glorious crusade that is seeking to set Truth's Holy Sepulchre free from a usurped domination. We shall then see her resurrection! Meanwhile, although I cannot rank among my principles of action a fear of vengeance eternal, gratitude for predestined salvation, or a revelation of future glories as a reward, I fully participate in the belief that the only heaven here, or hereafter, is to be found in conformity with the will of the Supreme; a continual aiming at the attainment of the perfect ideal, the true *logos* that dwells in the bosom of the one Father. I hardly know whether I am ranting after the fashion of one of the Primitive Methodist prophetesses, with a cart for her rostrum. I am writing so fast. Good-bye, and blessings on you, as they will infallibly be on the children of peace and virtue.

Again about the same date in 1842 she writes to Mrs. Bray: —

A heart full of love and gratitude to you for all your kindness in thought and act to me undeserving. I daresay my manner belies my feelings; but friendship must live by faith and not by sight, and I shall be a great gainer by leaving you to interpret my mystic character without any other key than your own goodness.

Letter to Mrs. Bray, Feb. 1842.

The last letter of the series to Miss Lewis also refers

I daresay you have added, subtracted, and divided suppositions until you think you have a sure product, — viz., a good quantum, or rather, a bad one, of indifference and forgetfulness as the representation of my conduct towards you. If so, revise your arithmetic, for be it known to you that, having had my propensities, sentiments, and intellect gauged a second time, I am pronounced to possess a large organ of "adhesiveness," a still larger one of "firmness," and as large of "conscientiousness," — hence if I should turn out a very weather-cock and a most pitiful truckler, you will have data for the exercise of faith maugre common-sense, common justice, and the testimony of your eyes and ears.

Letter to Miss Lewis, 19th Feb. 1842.

How do you go on for society, for communion of spirit, the drop of nectar in the cup of mortals? But why do I say the drop? The mind that feels its value will get large draughts from some source, if denied it in the most commonly chosen way.

> 'Mid the rich store of nature's gifts to man
> Each has his loves, close wedded to his soul
> By fine association's golden links.
> As the Great Spirit bids creation teem
> With conscious being and intelligence,
> So man, His miniature resemblance, gives
> To matter's every form a speaking soul,
> An emanation from his spirit's fount,
> The impress true of its peculiar seal.
> Here finds he thy best image, sympathy.

Beautiful ego-ism, to quote one's own. But where is not this same ego? The martyr at the stake seeks its gratification as much as the court sycophant, the difference lying in the comparative dignity and beauty of the two egos. People absurdly talk of self-denial. Why, there is none in Virtue to a being of moral excellence: the greatest torture to such a soul would be to run counter to the

dictates of conscience; to wallow in the slough of meanness, deception, revenge, or sensuality. This was Paul's idea in the 1st chap. of 2d Epistle to Timothy (I think that is the passage).

I have had a weary week. At the beginning more than the usual amount of *cooled* glances, and exhortations to the suppression of self-conceit. The former are so many hailstones that make me wrap more closely around me the mantle of determinate purpose; the latter are needful, and have a tendency to exercise forbearance, that well repays the temporary smart. The heart knoweth its own, whether bitterness or joy: let us, dearest, beware how we, *even with good intentions*, press a finger's weight on the already bruised.

And about the same date she writes to Mrs. Bray: —

Letter to Mrs. Bray, end of Feb. 1842.

I must relieve my conscience before I go to bed by entering a protest against every word or accent of discontent that I uttered this morning. If I have ever complained of any person or circumstance, I do penance by eating my own words. When my real self has regained its place, I can shake off my troubles "like dewdrops from the lion's mane," and then I feel the baseness of imputing my sorrows to others rather than to my own pitiful weakness. But I do not write for your forgiveness; that I know I have. I only want to satisfy my indignation against myself.

The conclusion of the matter was, that Mr. Evans withdrew his house from the agent's hands, and his daughter went to stay at Griff, with Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Evans, whence she writes the following letter to Mrs. Pears: —

Letter to Mrs. Pears, Thursday, March, 1842.

I have just been climbing up some favourite old hills, or rather hillocks, and if I could see you I should find myself in high preparation for one of my thorough chats. Oh if I could transport myself to your dining-room, where I guess you and Mr. Pears are sitting in anticipation of tea, carrying on no "holy war," but at peace with the world and its opinions, or, if ever you do battle, in the happy ranks of the majority, I could kiss you into sublime liberality! How are you and your dear husband and children? It seems a week of years instead of days since you said to me your kind good-bye, and as I have tried your magnanimity quite long enough to be assured that you will not let me hear of you without a beseeching letter from me, I snatch half an hour from a too short day for the generous purpose of doubly qualifying myself, first by pouring out the contents of my gossip-wallet, and then quietly awaiting the news I want to hear of you. I have here in every way abundant and unlooked-for blessings, — delicacy and consideration from all whom I have seen; and I really begin to recant my old belief about the indifference of all the world towards me, for my acquaintances of this neighbourhood seem to seek an opportunity of smiling on me in spite of my heresy. All these things, however, are but the fringe and ribbons of happiness. They are *ad*herent not *in*herent, and without any affectation I feel myself to be acquiring what I must hold to be a precious possession, an independence of what is baptised by the world external good. There are externals (at least, they are such in common thought) that I could ill part with, — the deep, blue, glorious heavens, bending as they

do over all, presenting the same arch, emblem of a truer omnipresence, wherever we may be chased, and all the sweet peace-breathing sights and sounds of this lovely earth. These, and the thoughts of the good and great, are an inexhaustible world of delight; and the felt desire to be one in will and design with the great mind that has laid open to us these treasures is the sun that warms and fructifies it. I am more and more impressed with the duty of *finding* happiness. On a retrospection of the past month, I regret nothing so much as my own impetuosity both of feeling and judging. I am not inclined to be sanguine as to my dear father's future determination, and I sometimes have an intensely vivid consciousness, which I only allow to be a fleeting one, of all that is painful and that has been so. I can only learn that my father has commenced his alterations at Packington, but he only appears to be temporarily acquiescing in my brother's advice "not to be in a hurry." I do not intend to remain here longer than three weeks, or, at the very farthest, a month; and if I am not then recalled, I shall write for definite directions. I must have a *home*, not a visiting place. I wish you would learn something from my father, and send me word how he seems disposed. I hope you get long walks on these beautiful days. You would love to hear the choristers we have here; they are hymning away incessantly. Can you not drive over and see me? Do come by hook or by crook. Why, Mr. Pears could almost walk hither. I am becoming very hurried, for most welcome tea is in the vicinity, and I must be busy after I have imbibed its inspiration. You will write to me to-morrow, will you not? and pray insist on Mr. Pears writing an appendix.

I had a note from Mrs. Bray this morning, and I liked it better than my breakfast. So do give me a little treat on Saturday. Blessings on you and yours, as all forlorn beggars have said from time immemorial to their benefactors; but real feeling, you know, will sometimes slip into a hackneyed guise.

Miss Evans remained for about three weeks at Griff, at the end of which time, through the intervention of her brother, the Brays, and Miss Rebecca Franklin, the father was very glad to receive her again, and she resumed going to church as before.

It will be seen from a subsequent noteworthy letter to Miss Sara Hennell, dated 19th October, 1843, that Miss Evans's view of the best course to be pursued under similar circumstances had already undergone considerable modifications, and in the last year of her life she told me that, although she did not think she had been to blame, few things had occasioned her more regret than this temporary collision with her father, which might, she thought, have been avoided by a little management.

In July of this year (1842) Miss Sara Hennell — the gifted sister of Mrs. Bray — came to Rosehill, on one of her occasional visits to Coventry, and completed the trio destined to exert the most important influence over the life of George Eliot. The individual characters of these three friends, and the relations each bore to their correspondent, will unfold themselves in the letters. It is only necessary here to say that the two ladies — Cara and Sara, as they are always addressed — now became like sisters to Miss Evans, and Mr. Bray her most intimate male friend, and the letters to them form an almost unbroken chain during all the remainder of George Eliot's life.

To us Miss Sara Hennell is the most important correspondent, for it is to her that Miss Evans mainly turns now for intellectual sympathy; to Mrs. Bray when she is in pain or trouble, and wants affectionate companion-

ship: with Mr. Bray she quarrels, and the humorous side of her nature is brought out. Every good story goes to him, with a certainty that it will be appreciated. With all three it is a beautiful and consistent friendship, running like a thread through the woof of the coming thirty-eight years. For the next twelve years, as will be seen, it is quite the most important thread; and although later it naturally became very much less important, it was never dropped except for a moment in 1854, owing to a brief misunderstanding of letters, which will appear in its due place.

The following letters to Miss Sara Hennell show what was passing from 30th August, 1842, to April, 1843: —

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 30th Aug. 1842.

How I have delighted in the thought that there are beings who are better than their promises beyond the regions of waking and sleeping dreams.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, Friday, Sept. 1842.

I have not yet accounted for my tardiness in writing, which, I assure you, is no representation of my usual habit, and has been occasioned only by a week's indisposition, the foster-parent to the ill-favoured offspring of my character and circumstances, gloom and stolidity, and I could not write to you with such companions to my thought. I am anxious that you should not imagine me unhappy even in my most melancholy moods, for I hold all indulgence of sadness that has the slightest tincture of discontent to be a grave delinquency. I think there can be few who more truly feel than I that this is a world of bliss and beauty, — that is, that bliss and beauty are the end, the tendency of creation; and evils are the shadows that are the only conditions of light in the picture, and I live in much, much enjoyment.

I am beginning to enjoy the "Eneid," though,

I suppose, much in the same way as the uninitiated enjoy wine compared with the connoisseurs.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 3d Nov. 1842.

I have been in high displeasure with myself, have thought my soul only fit for limbo to keep company with other abortions, and my life the shallowest, muddiest, most unblessing stream. Having got my head above this slough of despond, I feel quite inclined to tell you how much pleasure your letter gave me. You observe in your note that some persons say the unsatisfied longing we feel in ourselves for something better than the greatest perfection to be found on earth is a proof that the true object of our desires lies beyond it. Assuredly this earth is not the home of the spirit — it will rest only in the bosom of the Infinite. But the non-satisfaction of the affections and intellect being inseparable from the unspeakable advantage of such a mind as that of man in connection with his corporal condition and *terrene* destiny, forms not at present an argument with me for the realisation of particular desires.

The next letter refers to Miss Mary Hennell's[1] *last illness.*

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 7th Jan. 1843.

I cannot help wishing to tell you, now that you are in trouble and anxiety, how dear you are to me, and how the recollection of you is ever freshening in my mind. You have need of all your cheeriness and energy; and if they do not fail, I think it almost enviable, as far as one's self is concerned (not, of course, when the sufferer is remembered), to have the care of a sick-room, with its twilight and tip-

[1] Miss Mary Hennell was the author of "An Outline of the Various Social Systems founded on the Principle of Co-operation," published in 1841.

toe stillness, and helpful activity. I have always had a peculiarly peaceful feeling in such a scene.

Again, after the death of Miss Mary Hennell, there is a letter to her sister Sara.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, April, 1843.

We always find that our stock of appreciated good can never be really diminished. When the chief desire of the eyes is taken, we can afford a gaze to hitherto unnoticed possessions; and even when the topmost boughs are lopped, a thousand shoots spring from below with the energy of new life. So it will be with you; but you cannot yet look beyond the present, nor is it desirable that you should. It would not be well for us to overleap one grade of joy or suffering: our life would lose its completeness and beauty.

Rosehill not only afforded a pleasant variety in the Coventry life, as most visitors to the town of any note found their way there, but the Brays were also frequently in the habit of making little holiday excursions, in many of which Miss Evans now joined. Thus we find them in May, 1843, all going to Stratford and Malvern, together with Mr. Charles Hennell and Miss Sara Hennell, for a week; and again in July of that year the same party, accompanied by Miss Brabant, daughter of Dr. Brabant of Devizes, went on a fortnight's tour, visiting Tenby amongst other places. This trip is chiefly memorable from the fact that it was indirectly responsible for Miss Evans undertaking the translation of Strauss's "Leben Jesu." For Miss Brabant (to whom the translation had been confided by Mr. Joseph Parkes of Birmingham and a group of friends) became engaged to be married to Mr. Charles Hennell; and shortly after her marriage she handed the work over to Miss Evans.

In the next two letters to Miss Sara Hennell there are allusions to the approaching marriage, which took place

in London on 1st November, 1843, — the Brays and Miss Evans being present.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 16th Sept. 1843.

Many thanks for procuring me the hymns and anthems. I was right glad to play "Ancient of Ages" again, and I shall like still better to sing it with you when we meet. That that is to be so soon, and under circumstances so joyful, are among the *mirabilia* of this changing world. To see and re-see such a cluster of not indifferent persons as the programme for the wedding gives, will be almost too large a *bonne bouche*.

I saw Robert Owen yesterday, Mr. and Mrs. Bray having kindly asked me to dine with him, and I think if his system prosper it will be in spite of its founder, and not because of his advocacy.

The next letter to Mrs. Bray gives a pleasant glimpse of their studies together, and of the little musical society that was in the habit of meeting at Rosehill to play concerted pieces.

Letter to Mrs. Bray, no date, 1843.

I only wish you would change houses with the mayor, that I might get to you when I would. I send you the first part of "Wallenstein," with the proposition that we should study that in conjunction with the "Thirty Years' War" as I happen to have a loose copy. We had better omit the "Lager," and begin "Die Piccolomini." You shall have "Joan of Arc," my grand favourite, as a *bonne bouche* when you have got through "Wallenstein" which will amply repay you for any trouble in translating it, and is not more difficult than your reading ought to be now. I have skimmed Manzoni, who has suffered sadly in being poured out of silver into pewter. The chapter on Philosophy

and Theology is worth reading. Miss Brabant sent me my Hyperion with a note the other day. She had put no direction besides Coventry, and the parcel had consequently been sent to some other Miss Evans, and my choice little sentimental treasures, alas! exposed to vulgar gaze. Thank you for the manual, which I have had so long. I trust I did not bestow those scratches on the cover. I have been trying to find a French book that you were not likely to have read, but I do not think I have one, unless it be "Gil Blas," which you are perhaps too virtuous to have read, though how any one can opine it to have a vicious tendency I am at a loss to conjecture. They might as well say that to condemn a person to eat a whole plum-pudding would deprive him of all future relish for plain food. I have had a visitor ever since Saturday, and she will stay till Saturday again. I cannot desire that you should *un*ask Violin and Flute, unless a postponement would be in every way as agreeable to you and them. If you have them, you will give them much more pleasure as Piano than I, so do not think of me in the matter for a moment. Good-bye; and remember to treat your cold as if it were an orphan's cold, or a widow's cold, or any one's cold but your own.

The following is the letter before referred to as containing an important and noteworthy declaration of opinion on the very interesting question of conformity: —

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 19th Oct. 1843.

The first thing I have to say to you is to entreat that you and Mrs. Hennell will not perplex yourselves for a moment about my accommodation during the night. I am so well now that a hearthrug would

be as luxurious a couch as I should need, and I defy anything short of a kettledrum or my conscience to keep me awake after a long day.

The subject of your conversation with Miss D. is a very important one, and worth an essay. I will not now inflict one of mine on you, but I will tell you, as briefly as possible, my present opinion, which you know is contrary to the one I held in the first instance. I am inclined to think that such a change of sentiment is likely to happen to most persons whose views on religious matters undergo a change early in life. The first impulse of a young and ingenuous mind is to withhold the slightest sanction from all that contains even a mixture of supposed error. When the soul is just liberated from the wretched giant's bed of dogmas on which it has been racked and stretched ever since it began to think, there is a feeling of exultation and strong hope. We think we shall run well when we have the full use of our limbs and the bracing air of independence, and we believe that we shall soon obtain something positive which will not only more than compensate us for what we have renounced, but will be so well worth offering to others that we may venture to proselytise as fast as our zeal for truth may prompt us. But a year or two of reflection, and the experience of our own miserable weakness, which will ill afford to part even with the crutch of superstition, must, I think, effect a change. Speculative truth begins to appear but a shadow of individual minds. Agreement between intellects seems unattainable, and we turn to the *truth of feeling* as the only universal bond of union. We find that the intellectual errors which we once fancied were a mere incrustation have grown into

the living body, and that we cannot in the majority of cases wrench them away without destroying vitality. We begin to find that with individuals, as with nations, the only safe revolution is one arising out of the wants which their own progress has generated. It is the quackery of infidelity to suppose that it has a nostrum for all mankind, and to say to all and singular, "Swallow my opinions and you shall be whole." If, then, we are debarred by such considerations from trying to reorganise opinions, are we to remain aloof from our fellow-creatures on occasions when we may fully sympathise with the feelings exercised, although our own have been melted into another mould? Ought we not on every opportunity to seek to have our feelings in harmony, though not in union, with those who are often richer in the fruits of faith, though not in reason, than ourselves? The results of nonconformity in a family are just an epitome of what happens on a larger scale in the world. An influential member chooses to omit an observance which, in the minds of all the rest, is associated with what is highest and most venerable. He cannot make his reasons intelligible, and so his conduct is regarded as a relaxation of the hold that moral ties had on him previously. The rest are infected with the disease they imagine in him. All the screws by which order was maintained are loosened, and in more than one case a person's happiness may be ruined by the confusion of ideas which took the form of principles. But, it may be said, how then are we to do anything towards the advancement of mankind? Are we to go on cherishing superstitions out of a fear that seems inconsistent with any faith in a Supreme Being? I think the best and

the only way of fulfilling our mission is to sow good seed in good (*i. e.*, prepared) ground, and not to root up tares where we must inevitably gather all the wheat with them. We cannot fight and struggle enough for freedom of inquiry, and we need not be idle in imparting all that is pure and lovely to children whose minds are unbespoken. Those who can write, let them do it as boldly as they like, — and let no one hesitate at proper seasons to make a full *con*fession (far better than *pro*fession). St. Paul's reasoning about the conduct of the strong towards the weak, in the 14th and 15th chapters of Romans, is just in point. But I have not said half what I meant to say. There are so many aspects in which the subject might be presented, that it is useless to attempt to exhaust it. I fear I have written very unintelligibly, for it is rather late, and I am so cold that my thoughts are almost frozen.

After Miss Brabant's marriage to Mr. Charles Hennell, Miss Evans went to stay for a week or two with Dr. Brabant at Devizes, and some time about the beginning of January, 1844, the proposition was made for the transfer of the translation of Strauss from Mrs. Charles Hennell. At the end of April, 1844, Mrs. Bray writes to Miss Sara Hennell that Miss Evans is "working away at Strauss six pages a-day," and the next letter from Miss Evans refers to the beginning of the undertaking.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, Sunday, May, 1844.

To begin with business, I send you on the other side the translations you wished (Strauss), but they are perhaps no improvements on what you had done. I shall be very glad to learn from you the particulars as to the mode of publication, — who are the parties that will find the funds, and whether the manuscripts are to be put into the hands of any

one when complete, or whether they are to go directly from me to the publishers? I was very foolish not to imagine about these things in the first instance, but ways and means are always afterthoughts with me.

You will soon be settled and enjoying the blessed spring and summer time. I hope you are looking forward to it with as much delight as I. One has to spend so many years in learning how to be happy. I am just beginning to make some progress in the science, and I hope to disprove Young's theory that "as soon as we have found the key of life, it opes the gates of death." Every year strips us of at least one vain expectation, and teaches us to reckon some solid good in its stead. I never will believe that our youngest days are our happiest. What a miserable augury for the progress of the race and the destination of the individual, if the more matured and enlightened state is the less happy one! Childhood is only the beautiful and happy time in contemplation and retrospect: to the child it is full of deep sorrows, the meaning of which is unknown. Witness colic and whooping-cough and dread of ghosts, to say nothing of hell and Satan, and an offended Deity in the sky, who was angry when I wanted too much plum-cake. Then the sorrows of older persons, which children see but cannot understand, are worse than all. All this to prove that we are happier than when we were seven years old, and that we shall be happier when we are forty than we are now, which I call a comfortable doctrine, and one worth trying to believe! I am sitting with father, who every now and then jerks off my attention to the history of Queen Elizabeth, which he is reading.

On the 1st July, 1844, there was another little trip with the Brays to the Cumberland Lakes, this time returning by Manchester and Liverpool, and on reaching home about the beginning of August there is the following letter: —

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, Friday, Aug. 1844.

Can I have the remaining volumes of Strauss, excepting any part that you may choose to keep for your own use? If you could also send me such parts of the introduction and first section as you wish me to look over, I should like to despatch that business at intervals, when I am not inspired for more thorough labour. Thank you for the encouragement you send me. I only need it when my head is weak and I am unable to do much. Then I sicken at the idea of having Strauss in my head and on my hands for a lustrum, instead of saying good-bye to him in a year. When I can work fast I am never weary, nor do I regret either that the work has been begun or that I have undertaken it. I am only inclined to vow that I will never translate again, if I live to correct the sheets for Strauss. My first page is 257.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 31st Oct. 1844.

Pray tell Mrs. C. Hennell that no apology was needed for the very good translation she has sent me. I shall be glad to avail myself of it to the last word, for I am thoroughly tired of my own garb for Strauss's thoughts. I hope the introduction, &c., will be ready by the end of November, when I hope to have put the last words to the first volume. I am awfully afraid of my own translation, and I want you to come and comfort me. I am relapsing into heathen darkness about everything but Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. "Heaven has sent leanness into my soul" — for reviling

them, I suppose. This lovely autumn! Have you enjoyed its long shadows and fresh breezes?

I do not think it was kind to Strauss (I knew he was handsome) to tell him that a young lady was translating his book. I am sure he must have some twinges of alarm to think he was dependent on that most contemptible specimen of the human being for his English reputation. By the way, I never said that the Canons of the Council of Nice, or the Confession of Augsburg, or even the Thirty-nine Articles, are suggestive of poetry. I imagine no *dogmas* can be. But surely Christianity, with its Hebrew retrospect and millennial hopes, the heroism and divine sorrow of its founder, and all its glorious army of martyrs, might supply and has supplied a strong impulse not only to poetry but to all the Fine Arts. Mr. Pears is coming home from Malvern to-night, and the children are coming to tea with me, so that I have to make haste with my afternoon matters. Beautiful little Susan has been blowing bubbles, and looking like an angel at sport. I am quite happy, only sometimes feeling "the weight of all this unintelligible world."

Letter to Mrs. Bray, end of 1844.

Your books are come for the school, and I have covered them, — at least those that I think you will like for the children; two or three are quite for grown-up people. What an exquisite little thing that is of Harriet Martineau's, — "The Crofton Boys"! I have had some delightful crying over it. There are two or three lines in it that would feed one's soul for a month. Hugh's mother says to him, speaking of people who have permanent sorrow, "They soon had a new and delicious pleasure, which none but the bitterly disappointed can feel,

Letter to Mrs. Bray, Sunday, beginning of 1845.

— the pleasure of rousing their souls to bear pain, and of *agreeing with God silently*, when nobody knows what is in their hearts." I received "Sybil" yesterday quite safely. I am not utterly disgusted with D'Israeli. The man hath good veins, as Bacon would say, but there is not enough blood in them.

The 17th April this year was an interesting day, as Miss Evans went with the Brays to Atherstone Hall and met Harriet Martineau for the first time. It will be seen that in later years there was considerable intimacy between them.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 29th April, 1845.

If you think any of my future manuscript too untidy for the printer, only mark it to that effect, and I will rewrite it, for I do not mind that mechanical work; and my conscience is rather uneasy lest the illegibility of my hand should increase materially the expense of the publication. Do not be alarmed because I am not well just now: I shall be better very soon, and I am not really disgusted with Strauss. I only fancy so sometimes, as I do with all earthly things.

In June Mrs. Bray writes to Miss Hennell that Miss Evans "looks all the better for her London trip. I never saw her so blooming and buoyant;" but the two next letters show a relapse.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, end of June, (?) 1845.

Glad am I that some one can enjoy Strauss! The million certainly will not, and I have ceased to sit down to him with any relish. I should work much better if I had some proof-sheets coming in to assure me that my soul-stupefying labour is not in vain. I am more grateful to you than I can tell you for taking the trouble you do. If it had not been for your in-

terest and encouragement, I should have been almost in despair by this time.

And again a little later: —

I begin utterly to despair that Strauss will ever be published, unless I can imitate the Rev. Mr. Davis, and print it myself. At the very best, if we go on according to the rate of procedure hitherto, the book will not be published within the next two years. This seems dolorous enough to me, whose only real satisfaction just now is some hope that I am not sowing the wind. It is very laughable that I should be irritated about a thing in itself so trifling as a translation, but it is the very triviality of the thing that makes delays provoking. The difficulties that attend a really grand undertaking are to be borne, but things should run smoothly and fast when they are not important enough to demand the sacrifice of one's whole soul. The second volume is quite ready. The last few sections were written under anything but favourable circumstances. They are not Strauss's best thoughts, nor are they put into his translator's best language, but I have not courage to imitate Gibbon, — put my work in the fire and begin again.

In July, 1845, there seems to have arisen some difficulty in getting in the cash subscriptions for the publication. Mr. Charles Hennell and Mr Joseph Parkes, however, exerted themselves in the matter, and £300 was collected, and the following letter shows the relief it was to Miss Evans: —

Letter to Charles Hennell, Friday evening, July, 1845.

Thank you for sending me the good news so soon, and for sympathising in my need of encouragement. I have all I want now, and shall go forward on buoyant wing.

I am glad for the work's sake, glad for your sake, and glad for "the honourable gentleman's" sake, that matters have turned out so well. Pray think no more of my pens, ink, and paper. I would gladly give much more towards the work than these and my English, if I could do so consistently with duty.

The book now got into the hands of the printers, as will be seen from the next letter: —

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, Aug. 1845.

I have just been looking over some of the *revise*, and reading again your sweet letter to me from Hastings, and an impulse of gratitude and love will not let me rest without writing you a little note, though my hand has almost done its possible for the day under this intense heat. You do not guess how much pleasure it gives me to look over your pencillings, — they prove so clearly that you have really entered into the meaning of every sentence, and it always gives one satisfaction to see the evidence of brain-work. I am quite indebted to you for your care, and I feel greatly the advantage of having a friend to undertake the office of critic. There is one word I must mention, — Azazel is the word put in the original of the Old Testament for the scape-goat: now I imagine there is some dubiousness about the meaning, and that Strauss would not think it right to translate *scape-goat,* because, from the tenor of his sentence, he appears to include Azazel with the evil demons. I wonder if it be supposed by any one that Azazel is in any way a distinct being from the goat. I know no Hebrew scholar, and have access to no Hebrew lexicon. Have you asked Mr. Hennell about it?

Your letter describes what I *have* felt rather than what I feel. It seems as if my affections were quietly sinking down to temperate, and I every day seem more and more to value thought rather than feeling. I do not think this is man's best estate, but it is better than what I have sometimes known.

I am not ashamed to confess that I should like to be idle with you for a little while, more than anything else I can think of just now. But alas! leathery brain must work at leathery Strauss for a short time before my butterfly days come. Oh, how I shall spread my wings then! Anent the Greek, it would produce very dreadful cold perspirations indeed in me, if there were anything amounting to a serious error; but this, I trust, there will not be. You must really expect me, if not to sleep and snore *aliquando,* at least to nod in the course of some thousand pages. I should like you to be deliberate over the Schluss Abhandlung. It is the only part on which I have bestowed much pains, for the difficulty was *piquing*, not piquant.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, Friday evening, autumn of 1845.

I am never pained when I think Strauss right, — but in many cases I think him wrong, as every man must be in working out into detail an idea which has general truth, but is only one element in a perfect theory, — not a perfect theory in itself.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, no date, 1845.

I am delighted with the proof. The type and everything else are just what I wished. To see the first sheet is the next best thing to seeing the last, which I hope we shall all have done this time next year. There is a very misty vision of a trip to the Highlands haunting us in this quarter. The vision would be much pleasanter if Sara were one of the images in

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 25th Sept. 1845.

it. You would surely go if we went, and then the thing would be perfect. I long to see you, for you are becoming a sort of transfigured existence, a mere ideal to me, and I have nothing to tell me of your real flesh-and-blood self but sundry very useful little pencil marks, and a scrap of Mrs. Bray's notes now and then. So if you would have me bear in my memory your own self, and not some aerial creation that I call by your name, you must make your appearance.

In October "the misty vision" took palpable shape, and the Brays, Miss Hennell, and Miss Evans had a delightful fortnight in Scotland, — visiting Loch Lomond and Loch Katrine, the Trossachs, Stirling, Edinburgh, Melrose, and Abbotsford. They were away from the 14th to the 28th, and on returning to Coventry, Strauss was taken up again. Miss Hennell was reading the translation, and aiding with suggestions and corrections. The next letter to her seems to be dated in November.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, Nov. 1845.

Please to tell Mr. Hennell that "habits of thought" is not a translation of the word *particularismus*. This does not mean national idiosyncrasy, but is a word which characterises that idiosyncrasy. If he decidedly objects to *particularism*, ask him to be so good as substitute *exclusiveness*, though there is a shade of meaning in *particularismus* which even that does not express. It was because the word could only be translated by a circumlocution that I ventured to anglicise it.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, Tuesday morning, Dec. (?) 1845.

I have been idle, and have not done a stroke to the prefaces, but they shall be sent as soon as possible. Thanks for the copy of the Latin preface and letter. They are in preconceived harmony with my ideas of the appropriate.

I will leave the titlepage to you and Mr. Hennell. Thanks for the news in your last *extra Blatt.* I am glad to find that the theological organs are beginning to deal with philosophy, but I can hardly imagine your writer to be a friend with a false cognisance on his shield. These dear orthodox people talk so simply sometimes, that one cannot help fancying them satirists of their own doctrines and fears, though they mean manfully to fight against the enemy. I should like if possible to throw the emphasis on *critically* in the titlepage. Strauss means it to be so; and yet I do not know how we can put anything better than what you say.

I send you to-day the conclusion of the chapter you are reading, and, unless you find anything of importance to be rectified, you need not return this to me, but may forward the whole to the printer as soon as you have read it. I am not altogether satisfied with the use of the word " sacrament " as applied specifically to the *Abendmahl.* It seems like a vulgarism to say *the* sacrament for one thing, and for another it does not seem *ab*original enough in the life of Jesus; but I know of no other word that can be substituted. I have altered passover to paschal meal, but τὸ πάσχα is used in the New Testament of the eating of the lamb *par excellence.* You remember in the title of the first section in the Schluss — which I had been so careless as to omit — the expression is " Nothwendiger Uebergang der Kritik in das Dogma." Now Dogmatism will not do, as that would represent *Dogmatismus.* "Dogmatik" is the idea, I believe, — *i. e.*, positive theology. Is it allowable to say *dogmatics,* think you? I do not understand how the want of MS. can be so pressing, as I have only had one proof for the last

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, Dec. 1845.

fortnight. It seems quite dispiriting to me now not to see the proofs regularly. I have had a miserable week of headache, but am better now, and ready for work, to which I must go.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 1st Jan. 1846.

I do pity you with the drunken Christmas workmen keeping you in this uncomfortable interregnum. But do not go distraught; the spring will really come, and the birds, — many having had to fly across the Atlantic, which is farther than you have to go to establish yourself. I could easily give the meaning of the Hebrew word in question, as I know where to borrow a lexicon. But observe there are two Hebrew words untranslated in this proof. I do not think it will do to give the English in one place and not in another where there is no reason for such a distinction, — and there is not here, for the note in this proof sounds just as fee-fo-fum-ish as the other without any translation. I could not alter the " troublesome," because it is the nearest usable adjective for *schwierig*, which stands in the German. I am tired of inevitable *importants*, and cannot bear to put them when they do not represent the German.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 26th Jan. 1846.

I have been sadly occupied for the last ten days. My father has been ill, and has required much attention, and my own head was very middling for some days, so that I send you but a poor cargo of new MS. Indeed, on looking through the last quire of paper this morning for the purpose of putting in the Greek, it seemed all very poor to me; but the subject is by no means inspiring, and no muse would condescend to visit such an uncertain votary as I have been for the last week or so. How is it that I have only had one proof this week? You know

we are five hundred pages in advance of the printer, so you need not be dreadfully alarmed. I have been so pleased to hear some of your letters read to me, but, alas! I can reflect no pleasure at this moment, for I have a woful pain and am in a desperate hurry.

On 14th February, 1846, Mrs. Bray writes to Miss Sara Hennell that Miss Evans "says she is Strauss-sick, — it makes her ill dissecting the beautiful story of the Crucifixion, and only the sight of the Christ image[1] *and picture make her endure it. Moreover, as her work advances nearer its public appearance, she grows dreadfully nervous. Poor thing, I do pity her sometimes, with her pale sickly face and dreadful headaches, and anxiety too about her father. This illness of his has tried her so much, for all the time she had for rest and fresh air she had to read to him. Nevertheless she looks very happy and satisfied sometimes in her work."*

And about the end of February there is the following letter from Miss Evans: —

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, end of Feb. 1846.

Health and greeting, my Achates, in this veritable spring month. I shall send you a parcel on Monday with 64 new pages of German for your intellectual man. The next parcel, which will be the LAST, I shall send on the Monday following, and when you have read to the end, you may, if you think it desirable, send the whole to me. Your dull ass does not mend his pace for beating; but he *does* mend it when he finds out that he is near his journey's end, and makes you wonder how he could pretend to find all the previous drawing so hard for him. I plead guilty to having set off in a regular scamper; but

[1] This was a cast, 20 inches high, of Thorwaldsen's grand figure of the risen Christ, which was placed in view in her study at Foleshill, where she did all her work at that time, — a little room on the first floor, with a charming view over the country.

be lenient and do not scold me if you find all sorts of carelessnesses in these last 100 pages.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, later in Feb. 1846.

I have been guilty of the most unpardonable piece of carelessness, for which I am stretched on a rack of anxiety and mortification. In the proof that came on Thursday, I unwittingly drew out a quarter sheet with the blotting-paper, and did not discover the mistake until Saturday morning, when about to correct the last proof. Surely the printer would discover the absence of the four pages and wait for them, — otherwise I would rather have lost one of my fingers or all the hair from my head than have committed such a *faux pas*. For there were three very awkward blunders to be corrected. All this vexation makes a cold and headache doubly intolerable, and I am in a most purgatorial state on this "good Sunday." I shall send the proofs with the unfortunate quarter sheet and an explanation to-night to Mr. Chapman, and prithee do thou enquire and see that the right thing is done. The tears are streaming from my smarting eyes — so farewell.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, March, 1846.

I wish we could get the book out in May, — why not? I suppose the binding could not be all got through, — the printing and writing I should think might be managed in time. Should n't I like to fleet the time away with thee as they did in the Golden Age, — after all our toils to lie reclined on the hills (spiritually), like gods together, careless of mankind. Sooth to speak, idleness, and idleness with thee, is just the most tempting mirage you could raise before my mind's eye, — I say mirage, because I am determined from henceforth to believe in no substantiality for future time, but to live in and love the

present, — of which I have done too little. Still the thought of being with you in your own home will attract me to that future; for without all controversy I love thee and miss thee.

My soul kisses thee, dear Sara, in gratitude for those dewy thoughts of thine in this morning's note. My poor adust soul wants such refreshment. Continue to do me good, — hoping for nothing again. I have had my sister with me all day — an interruption, alas! I cannot write more, but I should not be happy to let the day pass without saying one word to thee.

The last 100 pages have certainly been totally uninteresting to me, considered as matter for translation. Strauss has inevitably anticipated in the earlier part of his work all the principles and many of the details of his criticism, and he seems fagged himself. *Mais courage!* the neck of the difficulty is broken, and there is really very little to be done now. If one's head would but keep in anything like thinking and writing order! Mine has robbed me of half the last fortnight; but I am a little better now, and am saying to myself *Frisch zu!* The Crucifixion and the Resurrection are at all events better than the bursting asunder of Judas. I am afraid I have not made this dull part of Strauss even as tolerable as it might be, for both body and mind have recoiled from it. Thank you, dearest, for all your love and patience for me and with me. I have nothing on earth to complain of but subjective maladies. Father is pretty well, and I have not a single excuse for discontent through the livelong day.

As I believe that even your kindness cannot overcome your sincerity, I will cast aside my fear that your wish to see me in your own home is

rather a plan for my enjoyment than for yours. I believe it would be an unmixed pleasure to me to be your visitor, and one that I would choose among a whole bouquet of agreeable possibilities; so I will indulge myself, and accept the good that the heavens and you offer me. I am miserably in want of you to stir up my soul and make it shake its wings, and begin some kind of flight after something good and noble, for I am in a grovelling, slothful condition, and you are the *only* friend I possess who has an animating influence over me. I have written to Mr. Hennell anent the titlepage, and have voted for *critically examined*, from an entire conviction of its preferableness.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, end of March, 1846.

See what it is to have a person *en rapport* with you, that knows all your thoughts without the trouble of communication! I am especially grateful to you for restoring the "therefore" to its right place. I was about to write to you to get you to remonstrate about this and the "dispassionate calmness," which I did not at all like; but I thought you had corrected the prefaces, as the marks against the Latin looked like yours, so I determined to indulge my *laissez-faire* inclinations, for I hate stickling and debating unless it be for something really important. I do really like reading our Strauss, — he is so *klar und ideenvoll;* but I do not know *one* person who is likely to read the book through, — do you? Next week we will be merry and sad, wise and nonsensical, devout and wicked together.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, beginning of April, 1846.

On 19th April, 1846, Mrs. Bray writes to Miss Hennell that Miss Evans is "as happy as you may imagine at her work being done. She means to come and read Shakspeare through to us as her

first enjoyment." And again, on 27th April, that she "is delighted beyond measure with Strauss's elegant Preface. It is just what she likes. And what a nice letter too! The Latin is quite beyond me, but the letter shows how neatly he can express himself."

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER II

MARCH, 1841, TO APRIL, 1846

Foleshill — New friends — Mrs. Pears — Coventry life and engagements — Letters to Miss Lewis — Brother's marriage — Mental depression — Reading Nichol's "Architecture of the Heavens and Phenomena of the Solar System" — Makes acquaintance with Mr. and Mrs. Bray — Reads Charles Hennell's Book, "An Inquiry concerning the Origin of Christianity" — Effect of this book — Gives up going to church — Family difficulties — Letters to Mrs. Pears — Visit to Griff — Returns to Foleshill and resumes going to church — Acquaintance with Miss Sara Hennell, and development of friendship with her and Mr. and Mrs. Bray — Letters to Miss Sara Hennell describing mental characteristics — Attitude towards immortality — Death of Miss Mary Hennell — Excursion with the Brays, Mr. Charles Hennell, and Miss Hennell, to Stratford and Malvern, and to Tenby with same party and Miss Brabant — Meets Robert Owen — Studies German and music with Mrs. Bray — Letter to Miss Sara Hennell with important declaration of opinion in regard to conformity — Mr. Charles Hennell's marriage — Stay with Dr. Brabant at Devizes — Arrangement for translation of Strauss's "Leben Jesu" — Excursion with Brays to the Cumberland lakes, returning by Manchester and Liverpool — Weary of Strauss — Letter to Mrs. Bray — Poetry of Christianity — Admiration of Harriet Martineau's "The Crofton Boys" — Trip to London — Despair about publication of Strauss — Subscription of £300 for the work — In better heart — Minutiæ of Strauss translation — Pains taken with the Schluss Abhandlung — Opinion of Strauss's work — The book in print — Trip to the Highlands — Strauss difficulties — Miss Hennell reads the translation and makes suggestions — Suffering from headaches and "Strauss-sick" — The last MS. of the translation sent to Miss Hennell — Joy at finishing — Delighted with Strauss's Preface.

CHAPTER III

THE completion of the translation of Strauss is another milestone passed in the life journey of George Eliot, and the comparatively buoyant tone of the letters immediately following makes us feel that the galled neck is out of the yoke for a time. In May, Mrs. Bray had left home on a visit, and the next letter is addressed to her.

Letter to Mrs. Bray, Sunday (probably about 6th May), 1846.

Do not stay longer than is necessary to do you good, lest I should lose the pleasure of loving you, for my affections are always the warmest when my friends are within an attainable distance. I think I can manage to keep respectably warm towards you for three weeks without seeing you, but I cannot promise more. Tell Mr. Bray I am getting too amiable for this world, and Mr. Donovan's wizard hand would detect a slight corrugation of the skin on my organs 5 and 6:[1] they are so totally without exercise. I had a lecture from Mr. Pears on Friday, as well as a sermon this morning, so you need be in no alarm for my moral health. Do you never think of those Caribs who, by dint of flattening their foreheads, can manage to see perpendicularly above them without so much as lifting their heads? There are some good people who remind me of them. They see everything so clearly and with so little trouble, but at the price of sad self-mutilation.

On the 26th May, Miss Evans went to pay a visit to Mrs. and Miss Hennell at Hackney, and she writes from

[1] Organs of Combativeness.

there to Mrs. Bray, who was expected to join them in London.

Letter to Mrs. Bray, end of May, 1846.

I cannot deny that I am very happy without you, but perhaps I shall be happier with you, so do not fail to try the experiment. We have been to town only once, and are saving all our strength to "rake" with you; but we are as ignorant as Primitive Methodists about any of the amusements that are going. Please to come in a very mischievous, unconscientious, theatre-loving humour. Everybody I see is very kind to me, and therefore I think them all very charming; and having everything I want, I feel very humble and self-denying. It is only rather too great a bore to have to write to my friends when I am half asleep, and I have not yet reached that pitch of amiability that makes such magnanimity easy. Don't bring us any bad news or any pains, but only nods and becks and wreathèd smiles.

They staid in London till the 5th June, and on the 15th of that month the translation of Strauss was published. On the 2d July Mrs. Bray writes to Miss Hennell that Miss Evans "is going to Dover with her father for a fortnight." In passing through Dover on our way to the Continent in 1880 after our marriage, we visited the house they staid at in 1846, and my wife then told me that she had suffered a great deal there, as her father's health began to show signs of breaking up. On returning to Coventry there is the following letter referring to Wicksteed's review of the translation of Strauss, which was advertised for the forthcoming number of the "Prospective Review."

Do you think it worth my while to buy the "Prospective" for the sake of Wicksteed's review, — is

there anything new in it? Do you know if Mr. Chapman has any unusual facilities for obtaining cheap classics? Such things are to be got handsome and second-hand in London, — if one knew but the way. I want to complete Xenophon's works. I have the "Anabasis," and I might perhaps get a nice edition of the "Memorabilia" and "Cyropædia" in a cheaper way than by ordering them directly from our own bookseller. I have been reading the "Fawn of Sertorius." [1] I think you would like it, though the many would not. It is pure, chaste, and classic, beyond any attempt at fiction I ever read. If it be Bulwer's, he has been undergoing a gradual transfiguration, and is now ready to be exalted into the assembly of the saints. The Professor's letter, transmitted through you, gave me infinite consolation, more especially the apt and pregnant quotation from Berosus. Precious those little hidden lakelets of knowledge in the high mountains, far removed from the vulgar eye, only visited by the soaring birds of love.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, Thursday, Aug. (?) 1846.

On 25th September, 1846, Mrs. Bray writes to Miss Hennell that Miss Evans "looks very brilliant just now. We fancy she must be writing her novel;" and then come the following letters, written in October and November: —

All the world is bathed in glory and beauty to me now, and thou sharest in the radiance. Tell me whether I live for you as you do for me, and tell me how gods and men are treating you. You must send me a scrap every month, — only a scrap with a dozen words in it, just to prevent me from starving on faith alone, — of which you know I have the minimum

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, Oct. 1846.

[1] Afterwards acknowledged by the author, Robert Landor (brother of Walter Savage Landor), who also wrote the "Fountain of Arethusa," &c.

of endowment. I am sinning against my Daddy by yielding to the strong impulse I felt to write to you, for he looks at me as if he wanted me to read to him.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 29th Oct. 1846.

I do not know whether I can get up any steam again on the subject of Quinet, but I will try, — when Cara comes back, however, for she has run away with "Christianity" into Devonshire, and I must have the book as a springing-board. When does the "Prospective" come out?

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 1st Nov. 1846.

The review of Strauss contains some very just remarks, — though, on the whole, I think it shallow, and in many cases unfair. The praise it gives to the translation is just what I should have wished, — indeed I cannot imagine anything more gratifying in the way of laudation. Is it not droll that Wicksteed should have chosen one of my interpolations, or rather paraphrases, to dilate on? The expression "granite," applied to the sayings of Jesus, is nowhere used by Strauss, but is an impudent addition of mine to eke out his metaphor. Did you notice the review of Foster's Life?[1] I am reading the life, and thinking all the time how you would like it. It is deeply interesting to study the life of a genius under circumstances amid which genius is so seldom to be found. Some of the thoughts in his journal are perfect gems.

The words of the Reviewer of the Strauss translation in the "Prospective" are worth preserving: "A faithful, elegant, and scholarlike translation. Whoever reads these volumes without any reference to the German must be pleased with the easy, perspicuous, idiomatic, and harmonious force of the English style. But he will be still

[1] John Foster, Baptist minister, born 1770, died 1843.

more satisfied when, on turning to the original, he finds that the rendering is word for word, thought for thought, and sentence for sentence. In preparing so beautiful a rendering as the present, the difficulties can have been neither few nor small in the way of preserving, in various parts of the work, the exactness of the translation, combined with that uniform harmony and clearness of style which imparts to the volumes before us the air and spirit of an original. Though the translator never obtrudes himself upon the reader with any notes or comments of his own, yet he is evidently a man who has a familiar knowledge of the whole subject; and if the work be the joint production of several hands, moving in concert, the passages of a specially scholastic character, at least, have received their version from a discerning and well-informed theologian. Indeed Strauss may well say, as he does in the notice which he writes for the English edition, that, as far as he has examined it, the translation is 'et accurata et perspicua.' "

Many things, both outward and inward, have concurred to make this November far happier than the last. One's thoughts

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, end of Nov. 1846.

"Are widened with the process of the suns;"

and if one is rather doubtful whether one is really wiser or better, it is some comfort to know that the desire to be so is more pure and dominant. I have been thinking of that most beautiful passage in Luke's Gospel, — the appearance of Jesus to the disciples at Emmaus. How universal in its significance! The soul that has hopelessly followed its Jesus, — its impersonation of the highest and best, — all in despondency; its thoughts all refuted, its dreams all dissipated! Then comes another Jesus, — another, but the same, — the same highest and best, only chastened, — crucified instead of triumphant, — and the soul learns that

this is the true way to conquest and glory. And then there is the burning of the heart, which assures that "this was the Lord!" — that this is the inspiration from above, — the true comforter that leads unto truth. But I am not become a Methodist, dear Sara; on the contrary, if I am pious one day, you may be sure I was very wicked the day before, and shall be so again the next.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 20th Dec. 1846.

I have been at Griff for the last week, or I should have written before. I thank you most heartily for sending me "Heliados," — first, because I admire it greatly in itself, and secondly, because it is a pretty proof that I am not dissociated from your most hallowed thoughts. As yet I have read it only once, but I promise myself to read it again and again. I shall not show it to any one, for I hate "friendly criticism," as much for you as for myself; but you have a better spirit than I, and when you come I will render "Heliados" up to you, that others may have the pleasure of reading it.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 18th Feb. 1847.

Lying in bed this morning grievously tormented, your "Heliados" visited me and revealed itself to me more completely than it had ever done before. How true that "it is only when all portions of an individual nature, or all members of society, move forward harmoniously together, that religious progress is calm and beneficial!" I imagine the sorrowful amaze of a child who had been dwelling with delight on the idea that the stars were the pavement of heaven's court, and that there above them sat the kind but holy God, looking like a venerable Father who would smile on his good little ones, — when it was cruelly told, before its mind had substance enough to bear such tension, that the sky was

not real, that the stars were worlds, and that even the sun could not be God's dwelling, because there were many, many suns. These ideas would introduce atheism into the child's mind, instead of assisting it to form a nobler conception of God (of course I am supposing the bare information given, and left to the child to work upon); whereas the idea it previously had of God was perfectly adapted to its intellectual condition, and formed to the child as perfect an embodiment of the all-good, all-wise, and all-powerful as the most enlightened philosopher ever formed to himself.

On 21st April Miss Evans went to London with the Brays, and, among other things, heard "Elijah" at Exeter Hall. On returning to Coventry she writes: —

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 30th April, 1847.

I did so long to see you after hearing "Elijah," just to exchange an exclamation of delight. Last night I had a perfect treat, too, in "I Puritani." Castellar was admirable as Elvira, and Gardoni as a seraph. N. B. — I liked the Babel less, — another sign of age.

Mention has already been made of Miss Mary Sibree (now Mrs. John Cash of Coventry); and as the following genial letter is addressed to her, it gives an opportunity for mentioning here that Miss Evans had a high regard for all the members of the Sibree family. At the end of this year (1847) and the beginning of 1848, there will be found an interesting correspondence with Miss Sibree's brother, Mr. John Sibree, who, in 1849, published a translation of Hegel's Lectures on the Philosophy of History, and in 1880, a volume of poems entitled "Fancy and other Rhymes." The subjoined extract from a communication from Mrs. Cash will show upon what terms Miss Evans was with the family: —

"*It was in the early part of the year 1841 that Miss*

Franklin came to see my mother at our house on the Foleshill Road, — about a mile and a half from Coventry, — to tell her, as a piece of most interesting news, that an old pupil, of whom she herself and her sister Rebecca had always been very proud, was coming at the Lady-Day quarter to live at a house on the same road, — within five minutes' walk of ours. This was Miss Evans, then 21 years of age. Miss Franklin dwelt with much pride on Miss Evans's mental power, on her skill in music, &c.; but the great recommendation to my mother's interest was the zeal for others which had marked her earnest piety at school, where she had induced the girls to come together for prayer, and which had led her to visit the poor most diligently in the cottages round her own home. Many years after, an old nurse of mine told me that these poor people had said after her removal, 'We shall never have another Mary Ann Evans.'

"My mother was asked to second and help her in work of this kind. 'She will be sure to get something up very soon,' was the last remark I can recall; and on her first visit to us I well remember she told us of a club for clothing, set going by herself and her neighbour Mrs. Pears, in a district to which she said 'the euphonious name of the Pudding-Pits had been given.' It was not until the winter of 1841, or early in 1842, that my mother first received (not from Miss Evans's own lips, but through a mutual friend) the information that a total change had taken place in this gifted woman's mind with respect to the evangelical religion, which she had evidently believed in up to the time of her coming to Coventry, and for which, she once told me, she had at one time sacrificed the cultivation of her intellect, and a proper regard to personal appearance. 'I used,' she said, 'to go about like an owl, to the great disgust of my brother; and I would have denied him what I now see to have been quite lawful amusements.' My mother's grief on hearing of this change in one whom she had begun to love, was very great; but she thought argument and expostulation might do much, and I well remember a long evening devoted to

it, but no more of the subject-matter than her indignant refusal to blame the Jews for not seeing in a merely spiritual Deliverer a fulfilment of promises of a temporal one; and a still more emphatic protest against my father's assertion that we had no claim on God. To Miss Evans's affectionate and pathetic speech to my mother, 'Now, Mrs. Sibree, you won't care to have anything more to do with me,' my mother rejoined, 'On the contrary, I shall feel more interested in you than ever.' But it was very evident at this time that she stood in no need *of sympathising friends: that the desire for congenial society, as well as for books and larger opportunities for culture, which had led her most eagerly to seek a removal from Griff to a home near Coventry, had been met beyond her highest expectations. In Mr. and Mrs. Bray, and in the Hennell family, she had found friends who called forth her interest and stimulated her powers in no common degree. This was traceable even in externals, — in the changed tone of voice and manner, — from formality to a geniality which opened my heart to her, and made the next five years the most important epoch in my life. She gave me (as yet in my teens) weekly lessons in German, speaking freely on all subjects, but with no attempt to directly unsettle my evangelical beliefs, confining herself in these matters to a steady protest against the claim of the Evangelicals to an exclusive possession of higher motives to morality, — or even to religion. Speaking to my mother of her dearest friend, Mrs. Bray, she said, 'She is the most religious person I know.' Of Mr. Charles Hennell, in whose writings she had great interest, she said, 'He is a perfect model of manly excellence.'*

"On one occasion at Mr. Bray's house at Rosehill, roused by a remark of his on the beneficial influence exercised by evangelical beliefs on the moral feelings, she said energetically, 'I say it now, and I say it once for all, that I am influenced in my own conduct at the present time by far higher considerations, and by a nobler idea of duty, than I ever was while I held the evangelical beliefs.' When at length, after my brother's year's resi-

dence at the Halle University (in 1842–43), my own mind having been much exercised in the matter of religion, I felt the moral difficulties press heavily on my conscience, and my whole heart was necessarily poured out to my 'Guide, Philosopher, and Friend,' the steady turning of my attention from theoretical questions to a confession of my own want of thoroughness in arithmetic, which I pretended to teach; and the request that I would specially give attention to this study and get my conscience clear about it, and that I would not come to her again until my views of religion were also clear, is too characteristic of Miss Evans, as I knew her during those years, and too much in harmony with the moral teaching of George Eliot, to be omitted in reminiscences by one to whom that wholesome advice proved a turning-point in life. Two things more I cannot omit to mention: one, the heightened sense given to me by her of the duty of making conversation profitable, and in general of using time for serious purposes, — of the positive immorality of frittering it away in ill-natured or in poor, profitless talk; another, the debt (so frequently acknowledged by Miss Evans to me) which she owed, during the years of her life with her father, to the intercourse she enjoyed with her friends at Rosehill. Mr. and Mrs. Bray and Miss Hennell, with their friends, were her *world, — and on my saying to her once, as we closed the garden door together, that we seemed to be entering a Paradise, she said, 'I do indeed feel that I shut the world out when I shut that door.' It is consoling to me now to feel that in her terrible suffering through her father's illness and death, which were most trying to witness, she had such alleviations.*"

Letter to Miss Mary Sibree, 10th May, 1847

It is worth while to forget a friend for a week or ten days, just for the sake of the agreeable kind of startle it gives one to be reminded that one has such a treasure in reserve, — the same sort of pleasure, I suppose, that a poor body feels who happens to lay his hand on an undreamt of sixpence which had sunk to a corner

of his pocket. When Mr. Sibree brought me your parcel, I had been to London for a week; and having been full of Mendelssohn oratorios and Italian operas, I had just this kind of delightful surprise when I saw your note and the beautiful purse. Not that I mean to compare you to a sixpence, — you are a bright golden sovereign to me, with edges all unrubbed, fit to remind a poor, tarnished, bruised piece like me, that there are ever fresh and more perfect coinages of human nature forthcoming. I am very proud of my purse, — first, because I have long had to be ashamed of drawing my old one out of my pocket; and secondly, because it is a sort of symbol of your love for me, — and who is not proud to be loved? For there is a beautiful kind of pride at which no one need frown, — I may call it a sort of impersonal pride, — a thrill of exultation at all that is good and lovely and joyous as a possession of our human nature.

I am glad to think of all your pleasure among friends new and old. Mrs. D.'s mother is, I daresay, a valuable person; but do not, I beseech thee, go to old people as oracles on matters which date any later than their thirty-fifth year. Only trust them, if they are good, in those practical rules which are the common property of long experience. If they are governed by one special idea which circumstances or their own mental bias have caused them to grasp with peculiar firmness, and to work up into original forms, make yourself master of their thoughts and convictions, the residuum of all that long travail which poor mortals have to encounter in their threescore years and ten, but do not trust their application of their gathered wisdom; for however just old people may be in their *principles* of judgment, they are often wrong in

their application of them from an imperfect or unjust conception of the matter to be judged. Love and cherish and venerate the old; but never imagine that a worn-out, dried-up organisation can be so rich in inspiration as one which is full fraught with life and energy. I am not talking like one who is superlatively jealous for the rights of the old; yet such I am, I assure thee. I heard Mendelssohn's new oratorio "Elijah" when I was in London. It has been performed four times in Exeter Hall to as large an audience as the building would hold, — Mendelssohn himself the conductor. It is a glorious production, and altogether I look upon it as a kind of sacramental purification of Exeter Hall, and a proclamation of indulgence for all that is to be perpetrated there during this month of May. This is a piece of impiety which you may expect from a lady who has been guanoing her mind with French novels. This is the impertinent expression of D'Israeli, who, writing himself much more detestable stuff than ever came from a French pen, can do nothing better to bamboozle the unfortunates who are seduced into reading his "Tancred" than speak superciliously of all other men and things, — an expedient much more successful in some quarters than one would expect. But *au fond*, dear Mary, I have no impiety in my mind at this moment, and my soul heartily responds to your rejoicing that society is attaining a more perfect idea and exhibition of Paul's exhortation, — "Let the same mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." I believe the Amen to this will be uttered more and more fervently, "Among all posterities for ever more."

Ask me not why I have never written all this weary time. I can only answer, "All things are

full of labour, — man cannot utter it," — *et seq.* See the 1st chapter of Ecclesiastes for my experience.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 15th June, 1847.

I have read the "Inquiry" again with more than interest, — with delight and high admiration. My present impression from it far surpasses the one I had retained from my two readings about five years ago. With the exception of a few expressions which seem too little discriminating in the introductory sketch, there is nothing in its whole tone from beginning to end that jars on my moral sense; and apart from any opinion of the book as an explanation of the existence of Christianity and the Christian documents, I am sure that no one, fit to read it at all, could read it without being intellectually and morally stronger, — the reasoning is so close, the induction so clever, the style so clear, vigorous, and pointed, and the animus so candid and even generous. Mr. Hennell ought to be one of the happiest of men that he has done such a life's work. I am sure if I had written such a book, I should be invulnerable to all the arrows of all spiteful gods and goddesses. I should say, "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself," seeing that I have delivered such a message of God to men. The book is full of *wit* to me. It gives me that exquisite kind of laughter which comes from the gratification of the reasoning faculties. For instance: "If some of those who were actually at the mountain doubted whether they saw Jesus or not, we may reasonably doubt whether he was to be seen at all there: especially as the words attributed to him do not seem at all likely to have been said, from the disciples paying no attention to them." "The disciples considered her

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 16th Sept. 1847.

[Mary Magdalene's] words idle tales, and believed them not." We have thus their example for considering her testimony alone as insufficient, and for seeking further evidence. To say "Jewish philosopher" seems almost like saying a round square: yet those two words appear to me the truest description of Jesus. I think the "Inquiry" furnishes the utmost that can be done towards obtaining a *real* view of the life and character of Jesus, by rejecting as little as possible from the Gospels. I confess that I should call many things "shining ether," to which Mr. Hennell allows the solid angularity of facts; but I think he has thoroughly worked out the problem, — subtract from the New Testament the miraculous and highly improbable, and what will be the remainder?

At the end of September Miss Evans and her father went for a little trip to the Isle of Wight, and on their return there is the following letter: —

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 13th Oct. 1847.

I heartily wish you had been with me to see all the beauties which have gladdened my soul, and made me feel that this earth is as good a heaven as I ought to dream of. I have a much greater respect for the Isle of Wight, now I have seen it, than when I knew it only by report, — a compliment which one can seldom very sincerely pay to things and people that one has heard puffed and bepraised. I do long for you to see Alum Bay. Fancy a very high precipice, the strata upheaved perpendicularly in rainbow-like streaks of the brightest maize, violet, pink, blue, red, brown, and brilliant white, worn by the weather into fantastic fretwork, the deep blue sky above, and the glorious sea below. It seems an enchanted land, where the earth is of more delicate,

refined materials than this dingy planet of ours is wrought out of. You might fancy the strata formed of the compressed pollen of flowers, or powder from bright insects. You can think of nothing but Calypsos, or Prosperos and Ariels, and such like beings.

I find one very great spiritual good attendant on a quiet meditative journey among fresh scenes. I seem to have removed to a distance from myself when I am away from the petty circumstances that make up my ordinary environment. I can take myself up by the ears and inspect myself like any other queer monster on a small scale. I have had many thoughts, especially on a subject that I should like to work out, — "The superiority of the consolations of philosophy to those of (so-called) religion." Do you stare?

Thank you for putting me on reading Sir Charles Grandison. I have read five volumes, and am only vexed that I have not the two last on my table at this moment, that I might have them for my *convives*. I had no idea that Richardson was worth so much. I have had more pleasure from him than from all the Swedish novels together. The morality is perfect, — there is nothing for the new lights to correct.

How do you like "Lélia," of which you have never spoken one word? I am provoked with you for being in the least pleased with "Tancred;" but if you have found out any lofty meaning in it, or any true picturing of life, tell it me, and I will recant. I have found two new readers of Strauss. One a lady at Leamington, who is also reading the "Inquiry," but likes Strauss better! The other is a gentleman here in Coventry; he says "it is most clever and

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 27th Nov. 1847

ingenious, and that no one whose faith rests only on the *common* foundation can withstand it." I think he may safely say that his faith rests on an *un*common foundation. The book will certainly give him a lift in the right direction from its critical, logical character, — just the opposite of his own. I was interested the other day in talking to a young lady who lives in a nest of clergymen, her brothers, but not of the evangelical school. She had been reading Blanco White's life, and seems to have had her spirits stirred within her, as every one's must be who reads the book with any power of appreciation. She is unable to account to herself for the results at which Blanco White arrived with his earnestness and love of truth; and she asked me if I had come to the same conclusions.

I think "Live and teach" should be a proverb as well as "Live and learn." We must teach either for good or evil; and if we use our inward light as the Quaker tells us, always taking care to feed and trim it well, our teaching must in the end be for good. We are growing old together, — are we not? I am growing happier too. I am amusing myself with thinking of the prophecy of Daniel as a sort of allegory. All those monstrous, "rombustical" beasts with their horns, — the horn with eyes and a mouth speaking proud things, and the little horn that waxed rebellious and stamped on the stars, seem like my passions and vain fancies, which are to be knocked down one after the other, — until all is subdued into a universal kingdom over which the Ancient of Days presides, — the spirit of love, — the Catholicism of the Universe, if you can attach any meaning to such a phrase. It *has* a meaning for my sage noddle.

I am reading George Sand's "Lettres d'un

Voyageur" with great delight, and hoping that they will some time do you as much good as they do me. In the meantime, I think the short letter about "Lélia" will interest you. It has a very deep meaning to my apprehension. You can send back the pages when you have duly digested them. I once said of you that yours was a sort of alkali nature, which would detect the slightest acid of falsehood. You began to phiz-zz directly it approached you. I want you as a test. I now begin to see the necessity of the arrangement (a bad word) that love should determine people's fate while they are young. It is so impossible to admire — "*s'enthousiasmer*" of — an *individual* as one gets older.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, Jan. 1848.

Here follows the interesting correspondence, referred to before, with Mr. John Sibree.

Begin your letter by abusing me according to my example. There is nothing like a little gunpowder for a damp chimney; and an explosion of that sort will set the fire of your ideas burning to admiration. I hate bashfulness and modesties, as Sir Hugh Evans would say; and I warn you that I shall make no apologies, though from my habit of writing only to people who, rather than have nothing from me, will tolerate nothings, I shall be very apt to forget that you are not one of those amiably silly individuals. I must write to you *more meo,* without taking pains or labouring to be *spirituelle* when heaven never meant me to be so; and it is your own fault if you bear with my letters a moment after they become an infliction. I am glad you detest Mrs. Hannah More's letters. I like neither her letters, nor her books, nor her character. She was

Letter to J. Sibree, beginning of 1848.

that most disagreeable of all monsters, a blue stocking, — a monster that can only exist in a miserably false state of society, in which a woman with but a smattering of learning or philosophy is classed along with singing mice and card-playing pigs. It is some time since I read "Tancred," so that I have no very vivid recollection of its details; but I thought it very "thin," and inferior in the working up to "Coningsby," and "Sybil." Young Englandism is almost as remote from my sympathies as Jacobitism, as far as its force is concerned, though I love and respect it as an effort on behalf of the people. D'Israeli is unquestionably an able man, and I always enjoy his tirades against liberal principles as opposed to popular principles, — the name by which he distinguishes his own. As to his theory of races, it has not a leg to stand on, and can only be buoyed up by such windy eloquence as, — You chubby-faced, squabby-nosed Europeans owe your commerce, your arts, your religion, to the Hebrews, — nay, the Hebrews lead your armies: in proof of which he can tell us that Masséna, a second-rate general of Napoleon's, was a Jew, whose real name was Manasseh. Extermination up to a certain point seems to be the law for the inferior races, — for the rest fusion both for physical and moral ends. It appears to me that the law by which privileged classes degenerate from continual intermarriage, must act on a larger scale in deteriorating whole races. The nations have been always kept apart until they have sufficiently developed their idiosyncrasies, and then some great revolutionary force has been called into action, by which the genius of a particular nation becomes a portion of the common mind of humanity. Looking at the matter

æsthetically, our idea of beauty is never formed on the characteristics of a single race. I confess the types of the pure races, however handsome, always impress me disagreeably; there is an undefined feeling that I am looking not at *man*, but at a specimen of an order under Cuvier's class Bimana. The negroes certainly puzzle me. All the other races seem plainly destined to extermination, not excepting even the Hebrew Caucasian. But the negroes are too important, physiologically and geographically, for one to think of their extermination; while the repulsion between them and the other races seems too strong for fusion to take place to any great extent. On one point I heartily agree with D'Israeli as to the superiority of the oriental races, — their clothes are beautiful and their manners are agreeable. Did you not think the picture of the Barroni family interesting? I should like to know who are the originals. The fellowship of race, to which D'Israeli so exultingly refers the munificence of Sidonia, is so evidently an inferior impulse, which must ultimately be superseded, that I wonder even he, Jew as he is, dares to boast of it. My Gentile nature kicks most resolutely against any assumption of superiority in the Jews, and is almost ready to echo Voltaire's vituperation. I bow to the supremacy of Hebrew poetry, but much of their early mythology, and almost all their history, is utterly revolting. Their stock has produced a Moses and a Jesus; but Moses was impregnated with Egyptian philosophy, and Jesus is venerated and adored by us only for that wherein He transcended or resisted Judaism. The very exaltation of their idea of a national deity into a spiritual monotheism seems to have been borrowed from the other oriental

tribes. Everything specifically Jewish is of a low grade.

And do you really think that sculpture and painting are to die out of the world? If that be so, let another deluge come as quickly as possible, that a new race of Glums and Gowries may take possession of this melancholy earth. I agree with you as to the inherent superiority of music, — as that questionable woman, the Countess Hahn-Hahn, says painting and sculpture are but an idealising of our actual existence. Music arches over this existence with another and a diviner. Amen, too, to that *ideenvoll* observation of Hegel's, — "We hardly know what it is to feel for human misery until we have heard a shriek: and a more perfect hell might be made out of sound than out of any preparation of fire and brimstone." When the tones of our voice have betrayed peevishness or harshness, we seem to be doubly haunted by the ghost of our sin: we are doubly conscious that we have been untrue to our part in the great Handel chorus. But I cannot assent to the notion that music is to supersede the other arts, or that the highest minds must necessarily aspire to a sort of Milton blindness, in which the *tiefste der Sinne* is to be a substitute for all the rest. I cannot recognise the truth of all that is said about the necessity of religious fervour to high art. I am sceptical as to the real existence of such fervour in any of the greatest artists. Artistic power seems to me to resemble dramatic power, — to be an intimate perception of the varied states of which the human mind is susceptible, with ability to give them out anew in intensified expression. It is true that the older the world gets, originality becomes less possible. Great subjects are used up, and civilisation

tends evermore to repress individual predominance, highly wrought agony, or ecstatic joy. But all the gentler emotions will be ever new, ever wrought up into more and more lovely combinations, and genius will probably take their direction.

Have you ever seen a head of Christ taken from a statue by Thorwaldsen of Christ scourged? If not, I think it would almost satisfy you. There is another work of his, said to be very sublime, of the Archangel waiting for the command to sound the last trumpet. Yet Thorwaldsen came at the fag end of time.

I am afraid you despise landscape painting; but to me even the works of our own Stanfield and Roberts and Creswick bring a whole world of thought and bliss, — "a sense of something far more deeply interfused." The ocean and the sky and the everlasting hills are spirit to me, and they will never be robbed of their sublimity.

I have tired myself with trying to write cleverly, *invitâ Minervâ*, and having in vain endeavoured to refresh myself by turning over Lavater's queer sketches of physiognomies, and still queerer judgments on them, it is a happy thought of mine that I have a virtuous reason for spending my *ennui* on you.

I send you a stanza I picked up the other day in George Sand's "Lettres d'un Voyageur," which is almost the ultimatum of human wisdom on the question of human sorrow: —

> "Le bonheur et le malheur,
> Nous viennent du même auteur,
> Voilà la *ressemblance*.
> Le bonheur nous rend heureux,
> Et le malheur malheureux,
> Voilà la différence."

Ah, here comes a cup of coffee to console me! When I have taken it, I will tell you what George Sand says: " Sais tu bien que tout est dit devant Dieu et devant les hommes quand l'homme infortuné demande compte de ses maux et qu'il obtient cette réponse? Qu'y a-t-il de plus? Rien." But I am not a mocking pen, and if I were talking to you instead of writing, you would detect some falsity in the ring of my voice. Alas! the atrabiliar patient you describe is first cousin to me in my very worst moods, but I have a profound faith that the serpent's head will be bruised. This conscious kind of false life that is ever and anon endeavouring to form itself within us, and eat away our true life, will be overcome by continued accession of vitality, by our perpetual increase in " quantity of existence," as Foster calls it. Creation is the superadded life of the intellect: sympathy, all-embracing love, the superadded moral life. These given more and more abundantly, I feel that all the demons, which are but my own egotism mopping and mowing and gibbering, would vanish away, and there would be no place for them, —

> " For every gift of noble origin
> Is breathed upon by hope's perpetual breath."

Evils, even sorrows, are they not all negations? Thus matter is in a perpetual state of decomposition, — superadd the principle of life, and the tendency to decomposition is overcome. Add to this consciousness, and there is a power of self-amelioration. The passions and senses decompose, so to speak. The intellect by its analytic power restrains the fury with which they rush to their own destruction; the moral nature purifies, beautifies, and at length transmutes them. But to whom am I

talking? You know far more *sur ce chapitre* than I.

Every one talks of himself or herself to me, and I beg you will follow every one's example in this one thing only. Individuals are precious to me in proportion as they unfold to me their intimate selves. I have just had lent me the journal of a person who died some years ago. When I was less venerable I should have felt the reading of such a thing insupportable; now it interests me, though it is the simplest record of events and feelings.

Mary says she has told you about Mr. Dawson and his lecture, — miserably crude and mystifying in some parts, but with a few fine passages. He is a very delightful man, but not (at least so say my impressions) a great man. How difficult it is to be great in this world where there is a tariff for spiritualities as well as for beeves and cheese and tallow! It is scarcely possible for a man simply to give out his true inspiration, — the real profound conviction which he has won by hard wrestling, or the few and far-between pearls of imagination: he must go on talking or writing by rote, or he must starve. Would it not be better to take to tent-making with Paul, or to spectacle-making with Spinoza?

Write and tell you that I join you in your happiness about the French Revolution? Very fine, my good friend. If I made you wait for a letter as long as you do me, our little *échantillon* of a millennium would be over: Satan would be let loose again; and I should have to share your humiliation instead of your triumph.

Letter to J. Sibree, Feb. 1848.

Nevertheless I absolve you, for the sole merit of

thinking rightly (that is, of course, just as I do) about *la grande nation* and its doings. You and Carlyle (have you seen his article in last week's "Examiner"?) are the only two people who feel just as I would have them, — who can glory in what is actually great and beautiful without putting forth any cold reservations and incredulities to save their credit for wisdom. I am all the more delighted with your enthusiasm because I did n't expect it. I feared that you lacked revolutionary ardour. But no, — you are just as *sansculottish* and rash as I would have you. You are not one of those sages whose reason keeps so tight a rein on their emotions that they are too constantly occupied in calculating consequences to rejoice in any great manifestation of the forces that underlie our every-day existence. I should have written a soprano to your Jubilate the very next day, but that, lest I should be exalted above measure, a messenger of Satan was sent in the form of a headache, and directly on the back of that a face-ache, so that I have been a mere victim of sensations, memories, and visions for the last week. I am even now, as you may imagine, in a very shattered, limbo-like mental condition.

I thought we had fallen on such evil days that we were to see no really great movement, — that ours was what St. Simon calls a purely critical epoch, not at all an organic one; but I begin to be glad of my date. I would consent, however, to have a year clipt off my life for the sake of witnessing such a scene as that of the men of the barricades bowing to the image of Christ, "who first taught fraternity to men." One trembles to look into every fresh newspaper lest there should be something to mar the picture; but hitherto even

the scoffing newspaper critics have been compelled into a tone of genuine respect for the French people and the Provisional Government. Lamartine can act a poem if he cannot write one of the very first order. I hope that beautiful face given to him in the pictorial newspaper is really his: it is worthy of an aureolel. I am chiefly anxious about Albert, the operative, but his picture is not to be seen. I have little patience with people who can find time to pity Louis Philippe and his moustachioed sons. Certainly our decayed monarchs should be pensioned off; we should have a hospital for them, or a sort of zoological garden, where these worn-out humbugs may be preserved. It is but justice that we should keep them, since we have spoiled them for any honest trade. Let them sit on soft cushions, and have their dinner regularly, but, for heaven's sake, preserve me from sentimentalising over a pampered old man when the earth has its millions of unfed souls and bodies. Surely he is not so Ahab-like as to wish that the revolution had been deferred till his son's days; and I think the shades of the Stuarts would have some reason to complain if the Bourbons, who are so little better than they, had been allowed to reign much longer.

I should have no hope of good from any imitative movement at home. Our working-classes are eminently inferior to the mass of the French people. In France the *mind* of the people is highly electrified; they are full of ideas on social subjects; they really desire social *reform*, — not merely an acting out of Sancho Panza's favourite proverb, "Yesterday for you, to-day for me." The revolutionary animus extended over the whole nation, and embraced the rural population, — not

merely, as with us, the artisans of the towns. Here there is so much larger a proportion of selfish radicalism and unsatisfied brute sensuality (in the agricultural and mining districts especially) than of perception or desire of justice, that a revolutionary movement would be simply destructive, not constructive. Besides, it would be put down. Our military have no notion of "fraternising." They have the same sort of inveteracy as dogs have for the ill-drest *canaille*. They are as mere a brute force as a battering-ram; and the aristocracy have got firm hold of them. And there is nothing in our Constitution to obstruct the slow progress of *political* reform. This is all we are fit for at present. The social reform which may prepare us for great changes is more and more the object of effort both in Parliament and out of it. But we English are slow crawlers. The sympathy in Ireland seems at present only of the water-toast kind. The Glasgow riots are more serious; but one cannot believe in a Scotch Reign of Terror in these days. I should not be sorry to hear that the Italians had risen *en masse*, and chased the odious Austrians out of beautiful Lombardy. But this they could hardly do without help, and that involves another European war.

Concerning the "tent-making," there is much more to be said, but am I to adopt your rule and never speak of what I suppose we agree about? It is necessary to me, not simply to *be* but to *utter*, and I require utterance of my friends. What is it to me that I think the same thoughts? I think them in a somewhat different fashion. No mind that has any *real* life is a mere echo of another. If the perfect unison comes occasionally, as in music, it enhances the harmonies. It is like a diffusion

or expansion of one's own life, to be assured that its vibrations are repeated in another, and words are the media of those vibrations. Is not the universe itself a perpetual utterance of the one Being? So I say again, utter, utter, utter, and it will be a deed of mercy twice blest, for I shall be a safety-valve for your communicativeness, and prevent it from splitting honest people's brains who don't understand you; and, moreover, it will be fraught with ghostly comfort to me.

I might make a very plausible excuse for not acknowledging your kind note earlier, by telling you that I have been both a nurse and invalid; but to be thoroughly ingenuous, I must confess that all this would not have been enough to prevent my writing but for my chronic disease of utter idleness. I have heard and thought of you with great interest, however. You have my hearty and not inexperienced sympathy; for, to speak in the style of Jonathan Oldbuck, I am *haud ignara mali*. I have gone through a trial of the same genus as yours, though rather differing in species. I sincerely rejoice in the step you have taken; it is an absolutely necessary condition for any true development of your nature. It was impossible to think of your career with hope, while you tacitly subscribed to the miserable *etiquette* (it deserves no better or more spiritual name) of sectarianism. Only persevere, — be true, firm, and loving, — not too anxious about immediate usefulness to others, — that can only be a result of justice to yourself. Study mental hygiene. Take long doses of *dolce far niente*, and be in no great hurry about anything in this 'varsal world! Do we not commit ourselves to sleep, and so resign all care for our-

Letter to J. Sibree, Sunday evening, later in 1848.

selves every night, lay ourselves gently on the bosom of nature or God? A beautiful reproach to the spirit of some religionists and ultra-good people!

I like the notion of your going to Germany as good in every way, for yourself, body and mind, and for all others. Oh the bliss of having a very high attic in a romantic Continental town, such as Geneva, — far away from morning-callers, dinners, and decencies, and then to pause for a year and think *de omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis*, and then to return to life, and work for poor stricken humanity, and never think of self again![1]

I am writing nearly in the dark, with the post-boy waiting. I fear I shall not be at home when you come home, but surely I shall see you before you leave England. However that may be, I shall utter a genuine *Lebewohl*.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 1st Feb. 1848.

In my view there are but two kinds of *regular* correspondence possible, — one of simple affection, which gives a picture of all the details, painful and pleasurable, that a loving heart pines after, and this we carry on through the medium of Cara; or one purely moral and intellectual, carried on for the sake of ghostly edification, in which each party has to put salt on the tails of all sorts of ideas on all sorts of subjects, in order to send a weekly or fortnightly packet, as so much duty and self-castigation. I have always been given to understand that such Lady-Jane-Grey-like works were your abhorrence. However, let me know what you *would* like, — what would make you continue to hold me in loving remembrance or convince you that you are a

[1] An *Ahnung* — a presentiment — of her own future.

bright evergreen in my garden of pleasant plants. Behold me ready to tear off my right hand or pluck out my right eye (metaphorically, of course, — I speak to an experienced exegetist, *comme dirait notre* Strauss), or write reams of letters full of interesting falsehoods or very dull truths. We have always concluded that our correspondence should be of the *third* possible kind, — one of impulse, which is necessarily irregular as the Northern lights.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 14th April, 1848.

I am a miserable wretch, with aching limbs and sinking spirits, but still alive enough to feel the kindness of your last note. I thoroughly enjoyed your delight in Emerson. I should have liked to see you sitting by him "with awful eye," for once in your life feeling all the bliss of veneration. I am quite uncertain about our movements. Dear father gets on very slowly, if at all. You will understand the impossibility of my forming any plans for my own pleasure. Rest is the only thing I can think of with pleasure now.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 20th April, 1848.

Dear father is so decidedly progressing towards recovery that I am full of quiet joy, — a gentle dawning light after the moonlight of sorrow. I have found already some of the "sweet uses" that belong only to what is called trouble, which is, after all, only a deepened gaze into life, like the sight of the darker blue and the thickening host of stars when the hazy effect of twilight is gone, — as our dear Blanco White said of death. I shall have less time than I have had at my own disposal probably; but I feel prepared to accept life, nay, lovingly to embrace it in any form in which it shall present itself.

Sometime in May, Mr. Evans and his daughter went to St. Leonards, and remained there till near the end of June. His mortal illness had now taken hold of him, and this was a depressing time both for him and for her, as will be seen from the following letters: —

Letter to Chas. Bray, May, 1848.

Your words of affection seem to make this earthly atmosphere sit less heavily on my shoulders, and in gratitude I must send you my thanks before I begin to read of Henry Gow and Fair Catharine for father's delectation. In truth, I have found it somewhat difficult to live for the last week, — conscious all the time that the only additions to my lot worth having must be more strength to love in my own nature; but perhaps this very consciousness has an irritating rather than a soothing effect. I have a fit of sensitiveness upon me, which after all is but egotism and mental idleness. The enthusiasm without which one cannot even pour out breakfast well (at least *I* cannot), has forsaken me. You may laugh and wonder when my enthusiasm has displayed itself, but that will only prove that you are no seer. I can never live long without it in some form or other. I possess my soul in patience for a time, believing that this dark, damp vault in which I am groping will soon come to an end, and the fresh green earth and the bright sky be all the more precious to me. But for the present my address is Grief Castle, on the River of Gloom, in the Valley of Dolour. I was amused to find that Castle Campbell in Scotland was called so. Truly for many seasons in my life I should have been an appropriate denizen of such a place; but I have faith that unless I am destined to insanity, I shall never again abide long in that same castle. I heartily say Amen to your dictum about the

cheerfulness of "large moral regions." Where *thought* and *love* are active, — thought the formative power, love the vitalising, — there can be no sadness. They are in themselves a more intense and extended participation of a divine existence. As they grow, the highest species of faith grows too, and all things are possible. I don't know why I should prose in this way to you. But I wanted to thank you for your note, and all this selfish grumbling was at my pen's end. And now I have no time to redeem myself. We shall not stay long away from home, I feel sure.

Letter to Chas. Bray, 31st May, 1848.

Father has done wonders in the way of walking and eating, — for him, — but he makes not the slightest attempt to amuse himself, so that I scarcely feel easy in following my own bent even for an hour. I have told you everything now, except that I look amiable in spite of a strong tendency to look black, and speak gently, though with a strong propensity to be snappish. Pity me, ye happier spirits that look amiable and speak gently, because ye *are* amiable and gentle.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 4th June, 1848.

Alas for the fate of poor mortals which condemns them to wake up some fine morning and find all the poetry in which their world was bathed, only the evening before, utterly gone! — the hard, angular world of chairs and tables and looking-glasses staring at them in all its naked prose! It is so in all the stages of life: the poetry of girlhood goes, — the poetry of love and marriage, — the poetry of maternity, — and at last the very poetry of duty forsakes us for a season, and we see ourselves, and all about us, as nothing more than miserable agglomerations of atoms, — poor tentative efforts of

the *Natur Princip* to mould a personality. This is the state of prostration, — the self-abnegation through which the soul must go, and to which perhaps it must again and again return, that its poetry or religion, which is the same thing, may be a real ever flowing river, fresh from the windows of heaven and the fountains of the great deep, — not an artificial basin, with grotto-work and gold-fish. I feel a sort of madness growing upon me, — just the opposite of the delirium which makes people fancy that their bodies are filling the room. It seems to me as if I were shrinking into that mathematical abstraction, a point. But I am wasting this "good Sunday morning" in grumblings.

Poor Louis Blanc! The newspapers make me melancholy; but shame upon me that I say "poor." The day will come when there will be a temple of white marble, where sweet incense and anthems shall rise to the memory of every man and woman who has had a deep *Ahnung*, a presentiment, a yearning, or a clear vision of the time when this miserable reign of Mammon shall end, — when men shall be no longer "like the fishes of the sea," — society no more like a face one half of which — the side of profession, of lip-faith — is fair and God-like, the other half — the side of deeds and institutions — with a hard old wrinkled skin puckered into the sneer of a Mephistopheles. I worship the man who has written as the climax of his appeal against society, "L'inégalité des talents *doit aboutir* non à l'inégalité des retributions mais à l'inégalité des devoirs." You will wonder what has wrought me up into this fury. It is the loathsome fawning, the transparent hypocrisy, the systematic

Letter to Chas. Bray, 8th June, 1848.

giving as little as possible for as much as possible, that one meets with here at every turn. I feel that society is training men and women for hell.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 23d June, 1848.

All creatures about to moult, or to cast off an old skin, or enter on any new metamorphosis, have sickly feelings. It was so with me. But now I am set free from the irritating worn-out integument. I am entering on a new period of my life, which makes me look back on the past as something incredibly poor and contemptible. I am enjoying repose, strength, and ardour in a greater degree than I have ever known, and yet I never felt my own insignificance and imperfection so completely. My heart bleeds for dear father's pains, but it is blessed to be at hand to give the soothing word and act needed. I should not have written this description of myself but that I felt your affectionate letter demanded some I-ism, which, after all, is often humility rather than pride. Paris, poor Paris — alas! alas!

Letter to Chas. Bray, June, 1848.

I have read "Jane Eyre," and shall be glad to know what you admire in it. All self-sacrifice is good, but one would like it to be in a somewhat nobler cause than that of a diabolical law which chains a man soul and body to a putrefying carcase. However the book *is* interesting; only I wish the characters would talk a little less like the heroes and heroines of police reports.

About the beginning of July Miss Evans and her father returned to Coventry; and the 13th July was a memorable day, as Emerson came to visit the Brays, and she went with them to Stratford. All she says herself about it is in this note.

I have seen Emerson, — the first *man* I have ever seen. But you have seen still more of him, so I need not tell you what he is. I shall leave Cara to tell how the day — the Emerson day — was spent, for I have a swimming head from hanging over the desk to write business letters for father. Have you seen the review of Strauss's pamphlet in the "Edinburgh"? The title is "Der Romantiker auf dem Throne der Cäsaren, oder Julian der Abtrünnige," — a sort of erudite satire on the King of Prussia; but the reviewer pronounces it to have a permanent value quite apart from this fugitive interest. The "Romantiker," or Romanticist, is one who, in literature, in the arts, in religion or politics, endeavours to revive the dead past. Julian was a romanticist in wishing to restore the Greek religion and its spirit, when mankind had entered on the new development. But you have very likely seen the review. I must copy one passage, translated from the conclusion of Strauss's pamphlet, lest you should not have met with it. "Christian writers have disfigured the death-scene of Julian. They have represented him as furious, blaspheming, despairing, and in his despair exclaiming, *Thou* hast conquered, O Galilean, 'νενίκηκας Γαλιλαῖε'! This phrase, though false as history, has a truth in it. It contains a prophecy, — to us a consoling prophecy, — and it is this: Every Julian — *i. e.*, every great and powerful man — who would attempt to resuscitate a state of society which has died, will infallibly be vanquished by the Galilean, — for the Galilean is nothing less than the genius of the future!"

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, Friday, July, 1848.

Father's tongue has just given utterance to a thought which has been very visibly radiating from

his eager eyes for some minutes, — "I thought you were going on with the book." I can only bless you for those two notes, which have emanated from you like so much ambrosial scent from roses and lavender. Not less am I grateful for the Carlyle eulogium.[1] I have shed some quite delicious tears over it. This is a world worth abiding in while one man can thus venerate and love another. More anon, — this from my doleful prison of stupidity and barrenness, with a yawning trap-door ready to let me down into utter fatuity. But I can even yet feel the omnipotence of a glorious chord. Poor pebble as I am, left entangled among slimy weeds, I can yet hear from afar the rushing of the blessed torrent, and rejoice that it is there to bathe and brighten other pebbles less unworthy of the polishing.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, Dec. 1848.

Thank you for a sight of our blessed St. Francis's[2] letter. There is no imaginable moment in which the thought of such a being could be an intrusion. His soul is a blessed *yea*. There is a sort of blasphemy in that proverbial phrase, "Too good to be true." The highest inspiration of the purest, noblest human soul is the nearest expression of the truth. Those extinct volcanoes of one's spiritual life — those eruptions of the intellect and the passions which have scattered the lava of doubt and negation over our early faith — are only a glorious Himalayan chain, beneath which new valleys of undreamed richness and beauty will spread themselves. Shall we poor earthworms have sublimer thoughts than the universe, of which we are poor

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, end of 1848.

[1] On Emerson.
[2] Francis Newman.

chips, — mere effluvia of mind, — shall we have sublimer thoughts than that universe can furnish out into reality? I am living unspeakable moments, and can write no more.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, Jan. 1849.

I think of you perpetually, but my thoughts are all aqueous; they will not crystallise, — they are as fleeting as ripples on the sea. I am suffering perhaps as acutely as ever I did in my life. Breathe a wish that I may gather strength, — the fragrance of your wish will reach me somehow.

The next letter is to Mrs. Houghton, who, it will be remembered, was the only daughter by Mr. Evans's first marriage. Miss Evans had more intellectual sympathy with this half-sister Fanny than with any of the other members of her family, and it is a pity that more of the letters to her have not been preserved.

Letter to Mrs. Houghton, Sunday evening, 1849.

I have been holding a court of conscience, and I cannot enjoy my Sunday's music without restoring harmony, without entering a protest against that superficial soul of mine which is perpetually contradicting and belying the true inner soul. I am in that mood which, in another age of the world, would have led me to put on sackcloth and pour ashes on my head, when I call to mind the sins of my tongue, — my animadversions on the faults of others, as if I thought myself to be something when I am nothing. When shall I attain to the true spirit of love which Paul has taught for all the ages? I want no one to excuse me, dear Fanny, — I only want to remove the shadow of my miserable words and deeds from before the divine image of truth and goodness, which I would have all beings worship. I need the Jesuits' discipline of silence, and

though my "evil speaking" issues from the intellectual point of view rather than the moral, — though there may be gall in the thought while there is honey in the feeling, yet the evil speaking is wrong. We may satirise character and qualities in the abstract without injury to our moral nature, but persons hardly ever. Poor hints and sketches of souls as we are, — with some slight transient vision of the perfect and the true, — we had need help each other to gaze at the blessed heavens instead of peering into each other's eyes to find out the motes there.

I have not touched the piano for nearly two months until this morning, when, father being better, I was determined to play a mass before the piano is utterly out of tune again. *Write, asking for nothing again,* like a true disciple of Jesus. I am still feeling rather shattered in brain and limbs, but do not suppose that I lack inward peace and strength. My body is the defaulter, — *consciously* so. I triumph over all things in the spirit, but the flesh is weak, and disgraces itself by headaches and backaches. I am delighted to find that you mention Macaulay, because that is an indication that Mr. Hennell has been reading him. I thought of Mr. H. all through the book, as the only person I could be quite sure would enjoy it as much as I did myself. I did not know if it would interest you: tell me more explicitly that it does. Think of Babylon being unearthed in spite of the prophecies? Truly we are looking before and after, "au jour d'aujourd'hui," as Monsieur Bricolin says. Send me the criticism of Jacques the morn's morning, — only beware there are not too many blasphemies against my divinity.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, Sunday morning, 4th Feb. 1849.

Paint soap-bubbles, — and never fear but I will find *a* meaning, though very likely not your meaning. Paint the crucifixion in a bubble, — after Turner, — and then the resurrection: I see them now.

There has been a vulgar man sitting by while I have been writing, and I have been saying parenthetical bits of civility to him to help out poor father in his conversation, so I have not been quite sure what I have been saying to you. I have woful aches which take up half my nervous strength.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 9th Feb. 1849.

My life is a perpetual nightmare, and always haunted by something to be done, which I have never the time, or rather the energy, to do. Opportunity is kind, but only to the industrious, and I, alas! am not one of them. I have sat down in desperation this evening, though dear father is very uneasy, and his moans distract me, just to tell you that you have full absolution for your criticism, which I do not reckon of the impertinent order. I wish you thoroughly to understand that the writers who have most profoundly influenced me, — who have rolled away the waters from their bed, raised new mountains and spread delicious valleys for me, — are not in the least oracles to me. It is just possible that I may not embrace one of their opinions, — that I may wish my life to be shaped quite differently from theirs. For instance, it would signify nothing to me if a very wise person were to stun me with proofs that Rousseau's views of life, religion, and government are miserably erroneous, — that he was guilty of some of the worst *bassesses* that have degraded civilised man. I might admit all this: and it would be not the less true that Rousseau's genius has sent that electric thrill through my intellectual and moral frame

which has awakened me to new perceptions, — which has made man and nature a fresh world of thought and feeling to me; and this not by teaching me any new belief. It is simply that the rushing mighty wind of his inspiration has so quickened my faculties that I have been able to shape more definitely for myself ideas which had previously dwelt as dim *Ahnungen* in my soul; the fire of his genius has so fused together old thoughts and prejudices, that I have been ready to make new combinations.

It is thus with George Sand. I should never dream of going to her writings as a moral code or text-book. I don't care whether I agree with her about marriage or not, — whether I think the design of her plot correct, or that she had no precise design at all, but began to write as the spirit moved her, and trusted to Providence for the catastrophe, which I think the more probable case. It is sufficient for me, as a reason for bowing before her in eternal gratitude to that "great power of God manifested in her," that I cannot read six pages of hers without feeling that it is given to her to delineate human passion and its results and (I must say, in spite of your judgment) some of the moral instincts and their tendencies, with such truthfulness, such nicety of discrimination, such tragic power, and withal, such loving, gentle humour, that one might live a century with nothing but one's own dull faculties, and not know so much as those six pages will suggest. The psychological anatomy of Jacques and Fernande in the early days of their marriage seems quite preternaturally true, — I mean that her power of describing it is preternatural. Fernande and Jacques are merely the feminine and the masculine nature, and their early married life an every-day tragedy;

but I will not dilate on the book or on your criticism, for I am so sleepy that I should write nothing but *bêtises*. I have at last the most delightful "De Imitatione Christi," with quaint woodcuts. One breathes a cool air as of cloisters in the book, — it makes one long to be a saint for a few months. Verily its piety has its foundations in the depth of the divine-human soul.

In March Miss Evans wrote a short notice of the "Nemesis of Faith" for the "Coventry Herald," in which she says: —

"We are sure that its author is a bright particular star, though he sometimes leaves us in doubt whether he be not a fallen 'son of the morning.'"

The paper was sent to Mr. Froude, and on 23d March Mrs. Bray writes to Miss Hennell: "Last night at dusk M. A. came running in in high glee with a most charming note from Froude, naïvely and prettily requesting her to reveal herself. He says he recognised her hand in the review in the 'Coventry Herald,' and if she thinks him a fallen star she might help him to rise, but he 'believes he has only been dipped in the Styx, and is not much the worse for the bath.' Poor girl, I am so pleased she should have this little episode in her dull life."

The next letter again refers to Mr. Froude's books.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, Wednesday, April, 1849.

Tell me not that I am a mere prater, — that feeling never talks. I will talk, and caress, and look lovingly, until death makes me as stony as the Gorgon-like heads of all the judicious people I know. What is anything worth until it is uttered? Is not the universe one great utterance? Utterance there must be in word or deed to make life of any worth. Every true pentecost is a gift of utterance. Life is too short and opportunities too meagre for many deeds;

besides, the best friendships are precisely those where there is no possibility of material helpfulness, — and I would take no deeds as an adequate compensation for the frigid glassy eye and hard indifferent tones of one's very solid and sensible and conscientious friend. You will wonder of what this is *apropos*, — only of a little bitterness in my own soul just at this moment, and not of anything between you and me. I have nothing to tell you, for all the " haps " of my life are so indifferent. I spin my existence so entirely out of myself that there is a sad want of proper names in my conversation, and I am becoming a greater bore than ever. It is a consciousness of this that has kept me from writing to you. My letters would be a sort of hermit's diary. I have so liked the thought of your enjoying the " Nemesis of Faith." I quote Keats's sonnet *apropos* of that book. It has made me feel —

> "Like some watcher of the skies
> When a new planet swims into his ken;
> Or like stout Cortez — when with eagle eyes
> He stared at the Pacific, and all his men
> Look'd at each other with a wild surmise, —
> Silent, upon a peak in Darien."

You must read " The Shadows of the Clouds." It produces a sort of palpitation that one hardly knows whether to call wretched or delightful. I cannot take up the book again, though wanting very much to read it more closely. Poor and shallow as one's own soul is, it is blessed to think that a sort of transubstantiation is possible by which the greater ones can live in us. Egotism apart, another's greatness, beauty, or bliss is one's own. And let us sing a *Magnificat* when we are conscious that this power of expansion and sympathy is growing, just in proportion as the individual sat-

isfactions are lessening. Miserable dust of the earth we are, but it is worth while to be so, for the sake of the living soul, — the breath of God within us. You see I can do nothing but scribble my own prosy stuff, — such chopped straw as my soul is foddered on. I am translating the "Tractatus Theologico-Politicus" of Spinoza, and seem to want the only friend that knows how to praise or blame. How exquisite is the satisfaction of feeling that another mind than your own sees precisely where and what is the difficulty, — and can exactly appreciate the success with which it is overcome. One knows — *sed longo intervallo* — the full meaning of the "fit audience though few." How an artist must hate the noodles that stare at his picture, with a vague notion that it *is* a clever thing to be able to paint!

Letter to Mrs. Pears, 10th May, 1849.

I know it will gladden your heart to hear that father spoke of you the other day with affection and gratitude. He remembers you as one who helped to strengthen that beautiful spirit of resignation which has never left him through his long trial. His mind is as clear and rational as ever, notwithstanding his feebleness, and he gives me a thousand little proofs that he understands my affection and responds to it. These are very precious moments to me; my chair by father's bedside is a very blessed seat to me. My delight in the idea that you are being benefited after all, prevents me from regretting you, though you are just the friend that would complete my comfort. Every addition to your power of enjoying life is an expansion of mine. I partake of your ebb and flow. I am going to my post now. I have just snatched an interval to let you know that though you have taken away a part of

yourself from me, neither you nor any one else can take the whole.

It will have been seen from these late letters, that the last few months of her father's illness had been a terrible strain on his daughter's health and spirits. She did all the nursing herself, and Mrs. Congreve (who was then Miss Bury, daughter of the doctor who was attending Mr. Evans, — and who, it will be seen, subsequently became perhaps the most intimate and the closest of George Eliot's friends) tells me that her father told her at the time, that he never saw a patient more admirably and thoroughly cared for. The translating was a great relief when she could get to it. Under date of 19th April, 1849, Mrs. Bray writes to Miss Hennell: "M. A. is happy now with this Spinoza to do: she says it is such a rest for her mind.

The next letter to Rosehill pathetically describes how the end came at last to Mr. Evans's sufferings: —

Letter to the Brays, half-past nine, Wednesday morning, 31st May, 1849.

Dear friends, Mr. Bury told us last night that he thought father would not last till morning. I sat by him with my hand in his till four o'clock, and he then became quieter and has had some comfortable sleep. He is obviously weaker this morning, and has been for the last two or three days so painfully reduced that I dread to think what his dear frame may become before life gives way. My brother slept here last night, and will be here again to-night. What shall I be without my father? It will seem as if a part of my moral nature were gone. I write when I can, but I do not know whether my letter will do to send this evening.

P. S. — Father is very, very much weaker this evening.

Mr. Evans died during that night, 31st May, 1849.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER III

MAY, 1846, TO MAY, 1849

Visit to Mrs. Hennell at Hackney — Letters to Mrs. Bray — Strauss Translation published — Visit to Dover with father — Classical books wanted — Pleasure in Strauss's letter — Brays suspect novel-writing — Letters to Miss Sara Hennell — Good spirits — Wicksteed's review of the Strauss Translation — Reading Foster's life — Visit to Griff — Child's view of God (*apropos* of Miss Hennell's "Heliados") — Visit to London — "Elijah" — Likes London less — The Sibree family and Mrs. John Cash's reminiscences — Letter to Miss Mary Sibree — Letters to Miss Sara Hennell — Mental depression — Opinion of Charles Hennell's "Inquiry" — Visit to the Isle of Wight with father — Admiration of Richardson — Blanco White — Delight in George Sand's "Lettres d'un Voyageur" — Letters to Mr. John Sibree — Opinion of Mrs. Hannah More's letters — "Tancred," "Coningsby," and "Sybil" — D'Israeli's theory of races — Gentile nature kicks against superiority of Jews — Bows only to the supremacy of Hebrew poetry — Superiority of music among the arts — Relation of religion to art — Thorwaldsen's Christ — Admiration of Roberts and Creswick — The intellect and moral nature restrain the passions and senses — Mr. Dawson the Lecturer — Satisfaction in French Revolution of '48 — The men of the barricade bowing to the image of Christ — Difference between French and English working-classes — The need of utterance — Sympathy with Mr. Sibree in religious difficulties — Longing for a high attic in Geneva — Letters to Miss Sara Hennell — Views on correspondence — Mental depression — Father's illness — Father better — Goes with him to St. Leonards — Letter to Charles Bray — Depression to be overcome by thought and love — Admiration of Louis Blanc — Recovery from depression — "Jane Eyre" — Return to Coventry — Meets Emerson — Strauss's pamphlet on Julian the Apostate — Carlyle's eulogium on Emerson — Francis Newman — Suffering from depression — Letter to Mrs. Houghton — Self-condemnation for evil speaking — Letters to Miss Hennell — Macaulay's History — On the influence of George Sand's and Rousseau's writing — Writes review of the "Nemesis of Faith" for the "Coventry Herald" — Opinion of the "Nemesis" and the "Shadows of the Clouds" — Translating Spinoza's "Tractatus Theologico-Politicus" — Letter to Mrs. Pears — The consolations of nursing — Strain of father's illness — Father's death.

CHAPTER IV

IT fortunately happened that the Brays had planned a trip to the Continent for this month of June, 1849, and Miss Evans, being left desolate by the death of her father, accepted their invitation to join them. On the 11th June they started, going by way of Paris, Lyons, Avignon, Marseilles, Nice, Genoa, Milan, Como, Lago Maggiore, Martigny, and Chamounix, arriving at Geneva in the third week of July. Here Miss Evans determined to remain for some months, the Brays returning home. Before they went, however, they helped her to settle herself comfortably en pension, *and, as will be seen from the following letters, the next eight months were quietly and peacefully happy. The* pension *selected in the first instance was the Campagne Plongeon, which stands on a slight eminence a few hundred yards back from the road on the route d'Hermance, some ten minutes' walk from the Hotel Métropole. From the Hotel National on the Quai de Mont Blanc one catches a pleasant glimpse of it nestling among its trees. A good-sized gleaming white house, with a centre and gables at each side, — a flight of steps leading from the middle window to the ground. A meadow in front, nicely planted, slopes charmingly down to the blue lake; and behind the house, on the left-hand side, there is an avenue of remarkably fine chestnut-trees, whence there is a magnificent view of the Jura mountains on the opposite side of the lake. The road to Geneva is very beautiful by the lake-side, bordered with plane-trees. It was a delightful, soothing change after the long illness and the painful death of her father, — after the monotonous dulness, too, of an English provincial town like Coventry, where there is little beauty of any sort to gladden the soul. In the first months following a great loss it is good to be alone for a time, — alone*

especially amidst beautiful scenes, — and alone in the sense of being removed from habitual associations, but yet constantly in the society of new acquaintances, who are sufficiently interesting, but not too intimate. The Swiss correspondence which follows is chiefly addressed to the Brays collectively, and describes the life minutely.

Letter to the Brays, 27th July, 1849.

About my comfort here, I find no disagreeables, and have every physical comfort that I care about. The family seems well-ordered and happy. I have made another friend too, — an elderly English lady, a Mrs. Locke, who used to live at Ryde, — a pretty old lady, with plenty of shrewdness and knowledge of the world. She began to say very kind things to me in rather a waspish tone yesterday morning at breakfast. I liked her better at dinner and tea, and to-day we are quite confidential. I only hope she will stay, — she is just the sort of person I shall like to have to speak to, — not at all "congenial," but with a character of her own. The going down to tea bores me, and I shall get out of it as soon as I can, unless I can manage to have the newspapers to read. The American lady embroiders slippers, — the mamma looks on and does nothing. The Marquis and his friends play at whist; the old ladies sew; and Madame says things so true that they are insufferable. She is obliged to talk to all, and cap their *niaiseries* with some suitable observation. She has been very kind and motherly to me. I like her better every time I see her. I have quiet and comfort, — what more can I want to make me a healthy reasonable being once more? I will never go near a friend again until I can bring joy and peace in my heart and in my face, — but remember that friendship will be easy then.

I hope my imagination paints truly when it

shows me all of you seated with beaming faces round the tea-table at Rosehill. I shall be yearning to know that things as well as people are smiling on you; but I am sure you will not let me wait for news of you longer than is necessary. My life here would be delightful if we could always keep the same set of people; but alas! I fear one generation will go and another come so fast that I shall not care to become acquainted with any of them. My good Mrs. Locke is not going, that is one comfort. She is quite a mother to me, — helps me to buy my candles and do all my shopping, — takes care of me at dinner, and quite rejoices when she sees me enjoy conversation or anything else. The St. Germains are delightful people, — the Marquise really seems to me the most charming person I ever saw, with kindness enough to make the ultra-politeness of her manners quite genuine. She is very good to me, and says of me, "Je m'interesse vivement à Mademoiselle." The Marquis is the most well-bred, harmless of men. He talks very little, — every sentence seems a terrible gestation, and comes forth *fortissimo;* but he generally bestows one on me, and seems especially to enjoy my poor tunes (mind you, all these trivialities are to satisfy your vanity, not mine, — because you are beginning to be ashamed of having loved me). The grey-headed gentleman got quite fond of talking philosophy with me before he went; but alas! he and a very agreeable young man who was with him are gone to Aix les Bains. The young German is the Baron de H. I should think he is not more than two or three and twenty, very good-natured, but a most determined enemy to all gallantry. I fancy he is a Communist; but he seems

Letter to the Brays, 5th Aug. 1849.

to have been joked about his opinions by Madame and the rest, until he has determined to keep a proud silence on such matters. He has begun to talk to me, and I think we should become good friends; but he, too, is gone on an expedition to Monte Rosa. He is expecting his brother to join him here on his return, but I fear they will not stay long. The *gouvernante* is a German, with a moral region that would rejoice Mr. Bray's eyes. Poor soul, she is in a land of strangers, and often seems to feel her loneliness. Her situation is a very difficult one; and "*die Angst*," she says, often brings on a pain at her heart. Madame is a woman of some reading and considerable talent, — very fond of politics, a devourer of the journals, with an opinion ready for you on any subject whatever. It will be a serious loss to her to part with the St. Germain family. I fear that they will not stay longer than this month. I should be quite indifferent to the world that comes or goes if once I had my boxes with all my books. Last Sunday I went with Madame to a small church near Plongeon, and I could easily have fancied myself in an Independent chapel at home. The spirit of the sermon was not a whit more elevated than that of our friend Dr. Harris, — the text, "What shall I do to be saved?" — the answer of Jesus being blinked as usual.

To-day I have been to hear one of the most celebrated preachers, M. Meunier. His sermon was really eloquent, — all written down, but delivered with so much energy and feeling that you never thought of the book. It is curious to notice how patriotism — *dévouement à la patrie* — is put in the sermons as the first of virtues, even before devotion to the Church. We never hear of it in England after we leave school. The good Mar-

quis goes with his family and servants, all nicely drest, to the Catholic Church. They are a most orderly set of people: there is nothing but their language and their geniality and politeness to distinguish them from one of the best of our English aristocratic families. I am perfectly comfortable: every one is kind to me and seems to like me. Your kind hearts will rejoice at this, I know. Only remember that I am just as much interested in all that happens to you at Rosehill as you are in what happens to me at Plongeon. Pray that the motto of Geneva may become mine, — "*Post tenebras lux.*"

I have no head for writing to-day, for I have been keeping my bed for the last three days; but I must remember that writing to you is like ringing a bell hung in the planet Jupiter, — it is so weary a while before one's letters reach. I have been positively sickening for want of my boxes, and anxiety to hear of my relations. Your kind letter of this morning has quieted the latter a little; but my boxes, alas! have not appeared. Do not be alarmed about my health. I have only had a terrible headache, — prolonged, in fact, by the assiduities of the good people here; for the first day I lay in bed I had the whole female world of Plongeon in my bedroom, and talked so incessantly that I was unable to sleep after it: the consequence, as you may imagine, was that the next day I was very much worse; but I am getting better, and indeed it was worth while to be ill to have so many kind attentions. There is a fresh German family from Frankfurt here just now, — Madame Cornelius and her children. She is the daughter of the richest banker in Frankfurt, and, what is better, full of heart and mind, with a face

Letter to the Brays, 20th Aug. 1849.

that tells you so before she opens her lips. She has more reading than the Marquise, being German and Protestant; and it is a real refreshment to talk with her for half an hour. The dear Marquise is a truly devout Catholic. It is beautiful to hear her speak of the comfort she has in the confessional, — for our *têtes-à-tête* have lately turned on religious matters. She says I am in a "mauvaise voie sous le rapport de la religion. Peut-être vous vous marierez, et le mariage, chère amie, sans la foi religieuse! . . ." She says I have isolated myself by my studies, — that I am too cold and have too little confidence in the feelings of others towards me, — that I do not believe how deep an interest she has conceived in my lot. She says Signor Goldrini (the young Italian who was here for a week) told her, when he had been talking to me one evening, "Vous aimerez cette demoiselle, j'en suis sûr" — and she has found his prediction true. They are leaving for their own country on Wednesday. She hopes I shall go to Italy and see her; and when I tell her that I have no faith that she will remember me long enough for me to venture on paying her a visit if ever I should go to Italy again, she shakes her head at my incredulity. She was born at Genoa. Her father was three years Sardinian Minister at Constantinople before she was married, and she speaks with enthusiasm of her life there, — "C'est là le pays de la vraie poésie oú l'on sent ce que c'est que de vivre par le cœur." M. de H. is returned from Monte Rosa. He would be a nice person if he had another soul added to the one he has by nature, — the soul that comes by sorrow and love. I stole his book while he was gone, — the first volume of Louis Blanc's "History of Ten Years." It contains a very inter-

esting account of the three days of July, 1830. His brother is coming to join him, so I hope he will not go at present. Tell Miss Sibree my address, and beg her to write to me all about herself, and to write on thin paper. I hardly know yet whether I shall like this place well enough to stay here through the winter. I have been under the disadvantage of wanting all on which I chiefly depend, — my books, &c. When I have been here another month, I shall be better able to judge. I hope you managed to get in the black velvet dress. The people dress, and think about dressing, here more even than in England. You would not know me if you saw me. The Marquise took on her the office of *femme de chambre* and drest my hair one day. She has abolished all my curls, and made two things stick out on each side of my head like those on the head of the Sphinx. All the world says I look infinitely better; so I comply, though to myself I seem uglier than ever, — if possible. I am fidgeted to death about my boxes, and that tiresome man not to acknowledge the receipt of them. I make no apology for writing all my peevishness and follies, because I want you to do the same, — to let me know everything about you, to the aching of your fingers, — and you tell me very little. My boxes, my boxes! I dream of them night and day. Dear Mr. Hennell! Give him my heartiest affectionate remembrances. Tell him I find no one here so spirited as he: there are no better jokes going than I can make myself. Mrs. Hennell and Mrs. C. Hennell too, all are remembered, — if even I have only seen them in England.

Mme. de Ludwigsdorff, the wife of an Austrian baron, has been here for two days, and is coming again. She is handsome, spirited, and clever, —

pure English by birth, but quite foreign in manners and appearance. She, and all the world besides, are going to winter in Italy. Nothing annoys me now, — I feel perfectly at home, and shall really be comfortable when I have all my little matters about me. This place looks more lovely to me every day, — the lake, the town, the *campagnes* with their stately trees and pretty houses, the glorious mountains in the distance; one can hardly believe one's self on earth: one might live here and forget that there is such a thing as want or labour or sorrow. The perpetual presence of all this beauty has somewhat the effect of mesmerism or chloroform. I feel sometimes as if I were sinking into an agreeable state of numbness on the verge of unconsciousness, and seem to want well pinching to rouse me. The other day (Sunday) there was a *fête* held on the lake, — the *fête* of Navigation. I went out with some other ladies in M. de H.'s boat at sunset, and had the richest draught of beauty. All the boats of Geneva turned out in their best attire. When the moon and stars came out, there were beautiful fireworks sent up from the boats. The mingling of the silver and the golden rays on the rippled lake, the bright colours of the boats, the music, the splendid fireworks, and the pale moon looking at it all with a sort of grave surprise, made up a scene of perfect enchantment, — and our dear old Mont Blanc was there in his white ermine robe. I rowed all the time, and hence comes my palsy. I can perfectly fancy dear Mrs. Pears in her Leamington house. How beautiful all that Foleshill life looks now, like the distant Jura in the morning! She was such a sweet, dear, good friend to me. My walks with her, my little

Letter to the Brays, 28th Aug. 1849.

visits to them in the evening, — all is remembered. I am glad you have seen Fanny again; any attention you show her is a real kindness to me, and I assure you she is worth it. You know, or you do not know, that my nature is so chameleon-like, I shall lose all my identity unless you keep nourishing the old self with letters, — so, pray, write as much and as often as you can. It jumps admirably with my humour to live in two worlds at once in this way. I possess my dearest friends and my old environment in my thoughts, — and another world of novelty and beauty in which I am actually moving, — and my contrariety of disposition always makes the world that lives in my thoughts the dearer of the two, — the one in which I more truly dwell. So, after all, I enjoy my friends most when I am away from them. I shall not say so, though, if I should live to rejoin you six or seven months hence. Keep me for seven [1] years longer and you will find out the use of me, like all other pieces of trumpery.

Letter to Mrs. Houghton, 6th Sept. 1849.

Have I confided too much in your generosity in supposing that you would write to me first? or is there some other reason for your silence? I suffer greatly from it, — not entirely from selfish reasons, but in great part because I am really anxious to know all about you, your state of health and spirits — the aspect of things within and without you. Did Mr. Bray convey to you my earnest request that you would write to me? You know of my whereabouts and circumstances from my good friends at Rosehill, so that I have little to tell you, — at least I have not spirit to write of myself until I have heard

[1] It may be noted as a curious verification of this presentiment that "Scenes of Clerical Life" were published in 1856, — just seven years later.

from you, and have an assurance from yourself that you yet care about me. Sara (Mrs. Isaac Evans) has sent me word of the sad, sad loss that has befallen poor Chrissey and Edward, — a loss in which I feel that I have a share; for that angelic little being had great interest for me, — she promised to pay so well for any care spent on her. I can imagine poor Edward's almost frantic grief, and I dread the effect on Chrissey's weak frame of her more silent suffering. Anything you can tell me about them will be read very eagerly. I begin to feel the full value of a letter, — so much so, that if ever I am convinced that any one has the least anxiety to hear from me, I shall always reckon it amongst the first duties to sit down without delay, giving no ear to the suggestions of my idleness and aversion to letter-writing. Indeed I am beginning to find it really pleasant to write to my friends, now that I am so far away from them; and I could soon fill a sheet to you if your silence did not weigh too heavily on my heart. My health is by no means good yet, — seldom good enough not to be a sort of drag on my mind; so you must make full allowance for too much egotism and susceptibility in me. It seems to be three years instead of three months since I was in England and amongst you, and I imagine that all sorts of revolutions must have taken place in the interim; whereas to you, I daresay, remaining in your old home and among your everyday duties, the time has slipped away so rapidly that you are unable to understand my anxiety to hear from you. I think the climate here is not particularly healthy, — I suppose from the vicinity of the lake, which, however, becomes so dear to me that one cannot bear to hear it accused. Good-bye, dear Fanny; a thousand blessings to

you whether you write to me or not, and much gratitude if you do.

My boxes arrived last Friday. The expense was fr. 150, — perfectly horrible! Clearly I must give myself for food to the fowls of the air or the fishes of the lake. It is a consolation to a mind imbued with a lofty philosophy, that when one can get nothing to eat, one can still be eaten, — the evil is only apparent. It is quite settled that I cannot stay at Plongeon; I must move into town. But, alas! I must pay fr. 200 per month. If I were there, I should see more conversable people than here. Do you think any one would buy my "Encyclopædia Britannica" at half-price, and my globes? If so, I should not be afraid of exceeding my means, and I should have a little money to pay for my piano, and for some lessons of different kinds that I want to take. The Encyclopædia is the last edition, and cost £42, and the globes £8 10*s*. I shall never have anywhere to put them, so it is folly to keep them if any one will buy them. No one else has written to me, though I have written to almost all. I would rather have it so than feel that the debt was on my side. When will you come to me for help, that I may be able to hate you a little less? I shall leave here as soon as I am able to come to a decision, as I am anxious to feel settled, and the weather is becoming cold. This house is like a bird-cage set down in a garden. Do not count this among my letters. I am good for nothing to-day, and can write nothing well but bitterness, so that I will not trust myself to say another word. The Baronne de Ludwigsdorff seems to have begun to like me very much, and is really kind; so you see heaven sends kind souls, though they are by no means

Letter to the Brays, 13th Sept. 1849.

kindred ones. Poor Mrs. Locke is to write to me, — has given me a little ring, — says, "Take care of yourself, my child, — have some tea of your own, — you 'll be quite another person if you get some introductions to clever people, — you 'll get on well among a certain set, — that 's true;" it is her way to say "that 's true," after all her affirmations. She says, "You won't find any kindred spirits at Plongeon, my dear."

I am feeling particularly happy because I have had very kind letters from my brother and sisters.

Letter to the Brays, 20th Sept. 1849.

I am ashamed to fill sheets about myself, but I imagined that this was precisely what you wished. Pray correct my mistake, if it be one, and then I will look over the Calvin MSS. and give you some information of really general interest, suited to our mutual capacities. Mme. Ludwigsdorff is so good to me, — a charming creature, — so anxious to see me comfortably settled, — petting me in all sorts of ways. She sends me tea when I wake in the morning, orange-flower water when I go to bed, — grapes, — and her maid to wait on me. She says if I like she will spend the winter after this at Paris with me, and introduce me to her friends there; but she does not mean to attach herself to me, because I shall never like her long. I shall be tired of her when I have sifted her, &c. She says I have more intellect than *morale*, and other things more true than agreeable; however, she is "greatly interested" in me, — has told me her troubles and her feelings, she says, in spite of herself; for she has never been able before in her life to say so much even to her old friends. It is a mystery she cannot unravel. She is a person of high culture, according to the ordinary notions of

what feminine culture should be. She speaks French and German perfectly, plays well, and has the most perfect polish of manner, — the most thorough refinement both socially and morally. She is tall and handsome, — a striking-looking person, but with a sweet feminine expression when she is with those she likes, — dresses exquisitely, — in fine, is all that I am not. I shall tire you with all this, but I want you to know what good creatures there are here as elsewhere. Miss F. tells me that the first day she sat by my side at dinner, she looked at me, and thought to herself, "That is a grave lady; I do not think I shall like her much;" but as soon as I spoke to her, and she looked into my eyes, she felt she could love me. Then she lent me a book written by her cousin — a religious novel — in which there is a fearful infidel who will not believe, and hates all who do, &c., &c. Then she invited me to walk with her, and came to talk in my room; then invited me to go to the Oratoire with them, till I began to be uncomfortable under the idea that they fancied I was evangelical, and that I was gaining their affection under false pretences; so I told Miss F. that I was going to sacrifice her good opinion, and confess my heresies. I quite expected from their manner and character that they would forsake me in horror, — but they are as kind as ever. They never go into the *salon* in the evening, and I have almost forsaken it, spending the evening frequently in Mme. de Ludwigsdorff's room, where we have some delightful tea. The tea of the house here is execrable; or rather, as Mrs. A. says, "How glad we ought to be that it has no taste at all, — it might have a very bad one!" I like the A's.; they are very good-

natured. Mrs. A., a very ugly but ladylike little woman, who is under an infatuation "as it regards" her caps, — always wearing the brightest rose-colour or intensest blue, — with a complexion not unlike a dirty primrose glove. The rest of the people are nothing to me, except, indeed, dear old Mlle. Faizan, who comes into my room when I am ill with "Qu'est ce que vous avez, ma bonne?" in the tone of the kindest old aunt, and thinks that I am the most amiable douce creature, which will give you a better opinion of her charity than her penetration.

Dear creatures! no one is so good as you yet. I have not yet found any one who can bear comparison with you; not in kindness to me, — *ça va sans dire*, — but in solidity of mind and in expansion of feeling. This is a very coarse thing to say, but it came to the end of my pen, and *litera scripta manet*, — at least when it comes at the end of the second page. I shall certainly stay at Geneva this winter, and shall return to England as early as the spring weather will permit, always supposing that nothing occurs to alter my plans. I am still thin; so how much will be left of me next April I am afraid to imagine. I shall be length without breadth. Cara's assurance that you are well and comfortable is worth a luncheon to me, which is just the thing I am generally most in want of, for we dine at six now. I love to imagine you in your home; and everything seems easy to me when I am not disturbed about the health or well-being of my loved ones. It is really so; I do not say it out of any sort of affectation, benevolent or otherwise. I am without carefulness, alas! in more senses than one. Thank Sara very heartily for her letter. I do not write a

special sheet for her to-day, because I have to write to two or three other people, but she must not the less believe how I valued a little private morsel from her; and also that I would always rather she wrote "from herself" than "to me," — that is my theory of letter-writing. Your letters are as welcome as Elijah's ravens, — I thought of saying the dinner-bell, only that would be too gross! I get impatient at the end of the ten days which it takes for our letters to go to and fro; and I have not the least faith in the necessity for keeping the sheet three or four days before Mr. Bray can find time to write his meagre bit. If you see the Miss Franklins, give my love to them; my remembrances to Mr. and Mrs. Whittem; love to Miss Sibree always. Hearty love to Clapton [1] and Woodford; [2] and a very diffusive benevolence to the world in general, without any particular attachment to A. or B. I am trying to please Mr. Bray. Good-bye, dear souls. *Dominus vobiscum.*

Letter to the Brays, Thursday, 4th Oct. 1849.

I am anxious for you to know my new address, as I shall leave here on Tuesday. I think I have at last found the very thing. I shall be the only lodger. The *appartement* is *assez joli*, with an alcove, so that it looks like a sitting-room in the daytime, — the people, an artist of great respectability, and his wife, a most kind-looking ladylike person, with two boys, who have the air of being well educated. They seem very anxious to have me, and are ready to do anything to accommodate me. I shall live with them, — that is, dine with them; breakfast in my own room. The terms are fr. 150 per month, light included. M. and Mme. D'Albert

[1] Mrs. Hennell. [2] Mr. and Mrs. Charles Hennell.

are middle-aged, — musical, and, I am told, have *beaucoup d'esprit*. I hope this will not exceed my means for four or five months. There is a nice large *salon* and a good *salle à manger*. I am told that their society is very good. Mme. de Ludwigsdorff was about going there a year ago, and it was she who recommended it to me.

I hope Sara's fears are supererogatory, — a proof of a too nervous solicitude about me, for which I am grateful, though it does me no good to hear of it. I want encouraging rather than warning and checking. I believe I am so constituted that I shall never be cured of my faults except by God's discipline. If human beings would but believe it, they do me most good by saying to me the kindest things truth will permit; and really I cannot hope those will be superlatively kind. The reason I wished to raise a little extra money is that I wanted to have some lessons and other means of culture, — not for my daily bread, for which I hope I shall have enough; but since you think my scheme impracticable, we will dismiss it. *Au reste*, be in no anxiety about me. Nothing is going wrong that I know of. I am not an absolute fool and weakling. When I am fairly settled in my new home, I will write again. My address will be — M. D'Albert, Rue des Chanoines, No. 107.

Letter to Mrs. Houghton, 4th Oct. 1849.

The blessed compensation there is in all things made your letter doubly precious for having been waited for, and it would have inspired me to write to you again much sooner, but that I have been in uncertainty about settling myself for the winter, and I wished to send you my future address. I am to move to my new home on Tuesday the 9th. I shall not

at all regret leaving here; the season is beginning to be rather sombre, though the glorious chestnuts here are still worth looking at half the day. You have heard of some of the people whom I have described in my letters to Rosehill. The dear little old maid, Mlle. Faizan, is quite a good friend to me, — extremely prosy, and full of tiny details; but really people of that calibre are a comfort to one occasionally, when one has not strength enough for more stimulating things. She is a sample of those happy souls who ask for nothing but the work of the hour, however trivial, — who are contented to live without knowing whether they effect anything, but who do really effect much good, simply by their calm and even *maintien*. I laugh to hear her say in a tone of remonstrance, — "Mme. de Ludwigsdorff dit qu'elle s'ennuie quand les soirées sont longues: moi, je ne conçois pas comment on peut s'ennuyer quand on a de l'ouvrage ou des jeux ou de la conversation." When people who are dressing elegantly and driving about to make calls every day of their life have been telling me of their troubles, — their utter hopelessness of ever finding a vein worth working in their future life, — my thoughts have turned towards many whose sufferings are of a more tangible character, and I have really felt all the old commonplaces about the equality of human destinies, always excepting those spiritual differences which are apart not only from poverty and riches but from individual affections. Dear Chrissey has found time and strength to write to me, and very precious her letter was, though I wept over it. "Deep abiding grief must be mine," she says, and I know well it must be. The mystery of trial! It falls with such ava-

lanche weight on the head of the meek and patient. I wish I could do something of more avail for my friends than love them and long for their happiness.

Letter to the Brays, 11th Oct. 1849.

M. and Mme. D'Albert are really clever people, — people worth sitting up an hour longer to talk to. This does not hinder Madame from being an excellent manager, — dressing scrupulously, and keeping her servants in order. She has hung my room with pictures, one of which is the most beautiful group of flowers conceivable thrown on an open Bible, — painted by herself. I have a piano which I hire. There is also one in the *salon*. M. D'Albert plays and sings, and in the winter he tells me they have parties to sing masses and do other delightful things. In fact, I think I am just in the right place. I breakfast in my own room at half-past eight, lunch at half-past twelve, and dine at four or a little after, and take tea at eight. From the tea-table I have gone into the *salon* and chatted until bedtime. It would really have been a pity to have stayed at Plongeon, out of reach of everything, and with people so little worth talking to. I have not found out the *désagrémens* here yet. It is raining horribly, but this just saves me from the regret I should have felt at having quitted the chestnuts of Plongeon. That *campagne* looked splendid in its autumn dress.

George Eliot retained so warm an admiration and love for M. D'Albert to the end of her life, that it seems fitting here to mention that he still lives, carrying well the weight of eighty winters. He is conservateur *of the Athénée, — a permanent exhibition of works of art in Geneva; and he published only last year (1883) a French translation of the "Scenes of Clerical Life," having already previ-*

ously published translations of "Adam Bede," "The Mill on the Floss," "Silas Marner," and "Romola." The description of his personal appearance, in the following letter, still holds good, save that the grey hair has become quite white. He lost his wife in 1880; and it will be seen from subsequent letters that George Eliot kept up a faithful attachment to her to the end. They were both friends after her own heart. The old apartment is now No. 18 instead of No. 107 Rue des Chanoines, and is occupied as the printing-office of the "Journal de Genève." But half of the rooms remain just as they were five-and-thirty years ago: the salon, *wainscoted in imitation light-oak panels, with a white China stove, and her bedroom opening off it, — as she had often described it to me; and M. D'Albert has still in his possession the painting of the bunch of beautiful flowers thrown on an open Bible mentioned in the last letter. He told me that when Miss Evans first came to look at the house, she was so horrified with the forbidding aspect of the stairs, that she declared she would not go up above the first floor; but when she got inside the door she was reconciled to her new quarters. Calvin's house is close to the Rue des Chanoines, and she was much interested in it. It will be seen that she did some work in physics under Professor de la Rive; but she principally rested and enjoyed herself during the stay at Geneva. It was exactly the kind of life she was in need of at the time, and the letters show how much she appreciated it.*

Letter to the Brays, 26th Oct. 1849.

I languished for your letter before it came, and read it three times running, — judge whether I care less for you than of old. It is the best of blessings to know that you are well and cheerful; and when I think of all that might happen in a fortnight to make you otherwise, especially in these days of cholera and crises, I cannot help being anxious until I get a fresh assurance that at least five days ago all was well. Before I say anything about myself, I must

contradict your suspicion that I paint things too agreeably for the sake of giving you pleasure. I assure you my letters are subjectively true, — the falsehood, if there be any, is in my manner of seeing things. But I will give you some *vérités positives*, in which, alas! poor imagination has hitherto been able to do little for the world. Mme. D'Albert anticipates all my wants, and makes a spoiled child of me. I like these dear people better and better, — everything is so in harmony with one's moral feeling, that I really can almost say I never enjoyed a more complete *bien être* in my life than during the last fortnight. For M. D'Albert, I love him already as if he were father and brother both. His face is rather haggard-looking, but all the lines and the wavy grey hair indicate the temperament of the artist. I have not heard a word or seen a gesture of his yet that was not perfectly in harmony with an exquisite moral refinement, — indeed one feels a better person always when he is present. He sings well, and plays on the piano a little. It is delightful to hear him talk of his friends, — he admires them so genuinely, — one sees so clearly that there is no reflex egotism. His conversation is charming. I learn something every dinner-time. Mme. D'Albert has less of genius and more of cleverness, — a really ladylike person, who says everything well. She brings up her children admirably, — two nice intelligent boys,[1] — the youngest particularly has a sort of Lamartine expression, with a fine head. It is so delightful to get among people who exhibit no meannesses, no worldlinesses, that one may

[1] Mr. Charles Lewes tells me that when he went to stay with the D'Alberts at Geneva, many years afterwards, they mentioned how much they had been struck by her extraordinary discernment of the character of these two boys.

well be enthusiastic. To me it is so blessed to find any departure from the rule of giving as little as possible for as much as possible. Their whole behaviour to me is as if I were a guest whom they delighted to honour. Last night we had a little knot of their most intimate musical friends, and M. and Mme. D'Albert introduced me to them as if they wished me to know them, — as if they wished me to like their friends and their friends to like me. The people and the evening would have been just after your own hearts. In fact, I have not the slightest pretext for being discontented, — not the shadow of a discomfort. Even the little housemaid Jeanne is charming, — says to me every morning, in the prettiest voice: " Madame a-t-elle bien dormi cette nuit? " — puts fire in my *chauffe-pied* without being told, — cleans my rooms most conscientiously. There, — I promise to weary you less for the future with my descriptions. I could not resist the temptation to speak gratefully of M. and Mme. D'Albert.

Give my love to Mrs. Pears, — my constant ever fresh remembrance. My love to Miss Rebecca Franklin, — tell her I have only spun my web to Geneva, — it will infallibly carry me back again across the gulf, were it twice as great. If Mr. Froude preached the new word at Manchester, I hope he will preach it so as to do without an after explanation, and not bewilder his hearers in the manner of Mephistopheles when he dons the doctor's gown of Faust. I congratulate you on the new edition,[1] and promise to read it with a disposition to admire when I am at Rosehill once more. I am beginning to lose respect for the petty acumen that sees difficulties. I love the souls

[1] "Philosophy of Necessity," by Charles Bray.

that rush along to their goal with a full stream of sentiment, — that have too much of the positive to be harassed by the perpetual negatives, — which, after all, are but the disease of the soul, to be expelled by fortifying the principle of vitality.

Good-bye, dear loves: sha'n't I kiss you when I am in England again, — in England! I already begin to think of the journey as an impossibility. Geneva is so beautiful now, the trees have their richest colouring. Coventry is a fool to it, — but then you are at Coventry, and you are better than lake, trees, and mountains.

We have had some delicious autumn days here. If the fine weather last, I am going up the Salève on Sunday with M. D'Albert. On one side I shall have a magnificent view of the lake, the town, and the Jura; on the other, the range of Mont Blanc. The walks about Geneva are perfectly enchanting. "Ah!" says poor Mlle. Faizan; "nous avons un beau pays si nous n'avions pas ces Radicaux!" The election of the Conseil d'État is to take place in November, and an *émeute* is expected. The actual Government is Radical, and thoroughly detested by all the "respectable" classes. The Vice-President of the Conseil, and the virtual head of the Government, is an unprincipled clever fellow, horribly in debt himself, and on the way to reduce the Government to the same position.

Letter to the Brays, 28th Oct. 1849.

I like my town life vastly. I shall like it still better in the winter. There is an indescribable charm to me in this form of human nest-making. You enter a by no means attractive-looking house, you climb up two or three flights of cold, dark-looking stone steps, you ring at a very modest door, and you

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 28th Oct. 1849.

enter a set of rooms snug or comfortable or elegant. One is so out of reach of intruders, so undiverted from one's occupations by externals, so free from cold rushing winds through hall doors, — one feels in a downy nest high up in a good old tree. I have always had a hankering after this sort of life, and I find it was a true instinct of what would suit me. Just opposite my windows is the street in which the Sisters of Charity live; and if I look out, I generally see either one of them or a sober-looking ecclesiastic. Then a walk of five minutes takes me out of all streets, within sight of beauties that I am sure you too would love, if you did not share my enthusiasm for the town. I have not another minute, having promised to go out before dinner, — so, dearest, take my letter as a hasty kiss, just to let you know how constantly I love you, — how, the longer I live and the more I have felt, the better I know how to value you.

I write at once to answer your questions about business. Spinoza and I have been divorced for several months. My want of health has obliged me to renounce all application. I take walks, play on the piano, read Voltaire, talk to my friends, and just take a dose of mathematics every day to prevent my brain from becoming quite soft. If you are anxious to publish the translation in question, I could, after a few months, finish the "Tractatus Theologico-Politicus" to keep it company; but I confess to you that I think you would do better to abstain from printing a translation. What is wanted in English is not a translation of Spinoza's works, but a true estimate of his life and system. After one has rendered his Latin faithfully into English, one

Letter to Charles Bray, 4th Dec. 1849.

feels that there is another yet more difficult process of translation for the reader to effect, and that the only mode of making Spinoza accessible to a larger number is to study his books, then shut them, and give an analysis. For those who read the very words Spinoza wrote, there is the same sort of interest in his style as in the conversation of a person of great capacity who has led a solitary life, and who says from his own soul what all the world is saying by rote; but this interest hardly belongs to a translation.

Letter to Mrs. Bray, 4th Dec. 1849.

Your letter is very sweet to me, giving me a picture of your quiet life. How shall I enable you to imagine mine, since you know nothing of the localities? My good friends here only change for the better. Mme. D'Albert is all affection; M. D'Albert all delicacy and intelligence; the friends to whom they have introduced me very kind in their attentions. In fact, I want nothing but a little more money to feel more at ease about my fires, &c. I am in an atmosphere of love and refinement; even the little servant Jeanne seems to love me, and does me good every time she comes into the room. I can say anything to M. and Mme. D'Albert. M. D'A. understands everything, and if Madame does not understand, she believes, — that is, she seems always sure that I mean something edifying. She kisses me like a mother, and I am baby enough to find that a great addition to my happiness. *Au reste*, I am careful for nothing; I am a sort of supernumerary spoon, and there will be no damage to the set if I am lost. My heart ties are not loosened by distance, — it is not in the nature of ties to be so; and when I think of my loved ones as those to whom I can be a comforter, a help,

I long to be with them again. Otherwise, I can only think with a shudder of returning to England. It looks to me like a land of gloom, of *ennui*, of platitude; but in the midst of all this it is the land of duty and affection, and the only ardent hope I have for my future life is to have given to me some woman's duty, — some possibility of devoting myself where I may see a daily result of pure calm blessedness in the life of another.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 4th Dec. 1849.

How do you look? I hope that *bandeau* of silvery locks is not widening too fast on the head I love so well, — that the eyes are as bright as ever. Your letter tells me they will beam as kindly as ever when I see them once more. Never make apologies about your letters, or your words, or anything else. It is your soul to which I am wedded; and do I not know too well how the soul is doubly belied, — first by the impossibility of being in word and act as great, as loving, as good as it wills to be, and again by the miserable weaknesses of the friends who see the words and acts through all sorts of mists raised by their own passions and preoccupations? In all these matters I am the chief of sinners, and I am tempted to rejoice in the offences of my friends, because they make me feel less humiliation. I am quite satisfied to be at Geneva instead of Paris; in fact, I am becoming passionately attached to the mountains, the lake, the streets, my own room, and, above all, the dear people with whom I live.

A thousand Christmas pleasures and blessings to you, — good resolutions and bright hopes for the New Year! Amen. People who can't be

witty exert themselves to be pious or affectionate. Henceforth I tell you nothing whatever about myself; for if I speak of agreeables, and say I am contented, Mr. Bray writes me word that you are all trying to forget me. If I were to tell you of disagreeables and privations and sadness, Sara would write: "If you are unhappy now, you will be so *à fortiori* ten years hence." Now, since I have a decided objection to doses sent by post which upset one's digestion for a fortnight, I am determined to give you no pretext for sending them. You shall not know whether I am well or ill, contented or discontented, warm or cold, fat or thin. But remember that I am so far from being of the same mind as Mr. Bray, that good news of you is necessary to my comfort. I walk more briskly, and jump out of bed more promptly, after a letter that tells me you are well and comfortable, that business is promising, that men begin to speak well of you, &c. "I am comforted in your comfort," as saith St. Paul to the troublesome Corinthians. When one is cabined, cribbed, confined in one's self, it is good to be enlarged in one's friends. Good Mr. Marshall! We wish to keep even unamiable people when death calls for them, much more good souls like him. I am glad he had had one more pleasant visit to Cara for her to think of. Dear Sara's letter is very charming, — not at all physicky, — rather an agreeable draught of *vin sucré*. Dear Mr. Hennell, we shall never look upon his like.

Letter to the Brays, 23d Dec. 1849.

I am attending a course of lectures on Experimental Physics by M. le Professeur de la Rive, the inventor, amongst other things, of the electroplating. The lectures occur every Wednesday and

Saturday. It is time for me to go. I am distressed to send you this shabby last fragment of paper, and to write in such a hurry, but the days are really only two hours long, and I have so many things to do that I go to bed every night miserable because I have left out something I meant to do. Good-bye, dear souls. Forget me if you like, you cannot oblige me to forget you; and the active is worth twice of the passive all the world over! The earth is covered with snow, and the Government is levelling the fortifications.

Letter to the Brays, 28th Jan. 1850.

You leave me a long time without news of you, though I told you they were necessary as a counteractive to the horrors of this terrible winter. Are you really so occupied as to have absolutely no time to think of me? I console myself, at least to-day, now we have a blue sky once more after two months of mist, with thinking that I am excluded by pleasanter ideas, — that at least you are well and comfortable, and I ought to content myself with that. The fact is, I am much of Touchstone's mind, — in respect my life is at Geneva, I like it very well, but in respect it is not with you, it is a very vile life. I have no yearnings to exchange lake and mountains for Bishop Street and the Radford Fields, but I have a great yearning to kiss you all and talk to you for three days running. I do not think it will be possible for me to undertake the journey before the end of March. I look forward to it with great dread. I see myself looking utterly miserable, ready to leave all my luggage behind me at Paris for the sake of escaping the trouble of it. We have had Alboni here, — a very fat siren. There has been some capital acting of comedies by friends of M. D'Albert, —

one of them is superior to any professional actor of comedy I have ever seen. He reads *vaudevilles* so marvellously that one seems to have a whole troupe of actors before one in his single person. He is a handsome man of fifty, full of wit and talent, and he married about a year ago.

Letter to Mrs. Houghton, 9th Feb. 1850.

It is one of the provoking contrarieties of destiny that I should have written my croaking letter when your own kind consolatory one was on its way to me. I have been happier ever since it came. After mourning two or three months over Chrissey's account of your troubles, I can only dwell on that part of your letter which tells that there is a little more blue in your sky, — that you have faith in the coming Spring. Shall you be as glad to see me as to hear the cuckoo? I mean to return to England as soon as the Jura is passable without sledges, — probably the end of March or beginning of April. I have a little *Heimweh* "as it regards" my friends. I yearn to see those I have loved the longest, but I shall feel real grief at parting from the excellent people with whom I am living. I feel they are my *friends,* — without entering into or even knowing the greater part of my views, they understand my character, and have a real interest in me. I have infinite tenderness from Mme. D'Albert. I call her always "maman;" and she is just the creature one loves to lean on and be petted by. In fact, I am too much indulged, and shall go back to England as undisciplined as ever. This terribly severe winter has been a drawback on my recovering my strength. I have lost whole weeks from headache, &c., but I am certainly better now than when I came to Mme. D'Albert. You tell me to give you these

details, so I obey. Decidedly England is the most comfortable country to be in in winter, — at least for all except those who are rich enough to buy English comforts everywhere. I hate myself for caring about carpets, easy-chairs, and coal fires, — one's soul is under a curse, and can preach no truth while one is in bondage to the flesh in this way; but alas! habit is the purgatory in which we suffer for our past sins. I hear much music. We have a reunion of musical friends every Monday. For the rest I have refused *soirées*, which are as stupid and unprofitable at Geneva as in England. I save all more interesting details, that I may have them to tell you when I am with you. I am going now to a *séance* on Experimental Physics by the celebrated Professor de la Rive. This letter will at least convince you that I am not eaten up by wolves, as they have been fearing at Rosehill. The English papers tell of wolves descending from the Jura and devouring the inhabitants of the villages, but we have been in happy ignorance of these editors' horrors.

If you saw the Jura to-day! The snow reveals its forests, ravines, and precipices, and it stands in relief against a pure blue sky. The snow is on the mountains only now, and one is tempted to walk all day, particularly when one lies in bed till ten, as your exemplary friend sometimes does. I have had no discipline, and shall return to you more of a spoiled child than ever. Indeed I think I am destined to be so to the end, — one of the odious swarm of voracious caterpillars, soon to be swept away from the earth by a tempest. I am getting better bodily. I have much less headache, but the least excitement fatigues me. Certainly if one cannot have

Letter to the Brays, 15th Feb. 1850.

a malady to carry one off rapidly, the only sensible thing is to get well and fat; and I believe I shall be driven to that alternative. You know that George Sand writes for the theatre? Her "François le Champi, — une Comédie," is simplicity and purity itself. The seven devils are cast out. We are going to have more acting here on Wednesday. M. Chancel's talent makes Maman's *soirées* quite brilliant. You will be amused to hear that I am sitting for my portrait, — at M. D'Albert's request, not mine. If it turns out well, I shall long to steal it to give to you; but M. D'Albert talks of painting a second, and in that case I shall certainly beg one. The idea of making a study of my visage is droll enough. I have the kindest possible letters from my brother and sisters, promising me the warmest welcome. This helps to give me courage for the journey; but the strongest magnet of all is a certain little group of three persons whom I hope to find together at Rosehill. Something has been said of M. D'Albert accompanying me to Paris. I am saddened when I think of all the horrible anxieties of trade. If I had children, I would make them carpenters and shoemakers; that is the way to make them Messiahs and Jacob Boehms. As for us who are dependent on carpets and easy-chairs, we are reprobates, and shall never enter into the kingdom of heaven. I go to the Genevese churches every Sunday, and nourish my heterodoxy with orthodox sermons. However, there are some clever men here in the Church, and I am fortunate in being here at a time when the very cleverest is giving a series of conferences. I think I have never told you that we have a long German lad of seventeen in the house, — the most taciturn and awk-

ward of lads. He said very naïvely, when I reproached him for not talking to a German young lady at a *soirée*, when he was seated next her at table, "Je ne savais que faire de mes jambes." They had placed the poor *garçon* against one of those card-tables, — all legs, like himself.

Letter to the Brays, 1st March, 1850.

The weather is so glorious that I think I may set out on my journey soon after the 15th. I am not quite certain yet that M. D'Albert will not be able to accompany me to Paris; in any case, a package of so little value will get along safely enough. I am so excited at the idea of the time being so near when I am to leave Geneva, — a real grief, — and see my friends in England, — a perfectly overwhelming joy, — that I can do nothing. I am frightened to think what an idle wretch I am become. And you all do not write me one word to tell me you long for me. I have a great mind to elope to Constantinople, and never see any one any more!

It is with a feeling of regret that we take leave of the pleasant town of Geneva, its lake and mountains, and its agreeable little circle of acquaintance. It was a peacefully happy episode in George Eliot's life, and one she was always fond of recurring to, in our talk, up to the end of her life.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER IV

JUNE, 1849, TO MARCH, 1850

Goes abroad with Mr. and Mrs. Bray — Geneva — Life at Campagne Plongeon — Letters to Brays describing surroundings — Mrs. Locke — The St. Germain family — Anxiety about her boxes with books, &c. — Hears M. Meunier preach — Patriotism the first of virtues — Mme. Cornelius — Mme. de Ludwigsdorff — "*Fête* of Navigation" on the lake — Demand for letters — Prophetic anticipation of position seven years later — Wishes to sell some of her books and globes to get music lessons — Letter to Mrs. Houghton — Loss of Mrs. Clarke's child — Love of Lake of Geneva — Letters to Brays — Mme. Ludwigsdorff wishes her to spend winter in Paris — Mlle. Faizan — Finds apartment in Geneva, No. 107 Rue des Chanoines, with M. and Mme. D'Albert — Enjoyment of their society — Remarks on translations of Spinoza — Hope of a woman's duty — Attachment to Geneva — Yearning for friends at home — Alboni — Private theatricals — Portrait by M. D'Albert — Remarks on education of children — Leaving Geneva.

CHAPTER V

M. D'ALBERT and his charge left Geneva towards the middle of March, and as the railway was not yet opened all the way to France, they had to cross the Jura in sledges, and suffered terribly from the cold. They joined the railway at Tonnerre, and came through Paris, arriving in England on the 23d of March. After a day in London, Miss Evans went straight to her friends at Rosehill, where she stayed for a few days before going on to Griff. It will have been seen that she had set her hopes high on the delights of home-coming, and with her too sensitive, impressionable nature, it is not difficult to understand, without attributing blame to any one, that she was pretty sure to be laying up disappointment for herself. All who have had the experience of returning from a bright sunny climate to England in March will recognise in the next letters the actual presence of the east wind, the leaden sky, the gritty dust, and le spleen.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, end of March, 1850, from Rosehill.

No; I am not in England, — I am only nearer the beings I love best. I try to forget all geography, and that I have placed myself irretrievably out of reach of nature's brightest glories and beauties to shiver in a wintry flat. I am unspeakably grateful to find these dear creatures looking well and happy, in spite of worldly cares, but your dear face and voice are wanting to me. But I must wait with patience, and perhaps by the time I have finished my visits to my relations, you will be ready to come to Rosehill again. I want you to scold me, and make me good. I am idle and naughty, — *on ne peut plus*,

— sinking into heathenish ignorance and woman's frivolity. Remember, you are one of my guardian angels.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, beginning of April, 1850, from Griff.

Will you send the enclosed note to Mrs. C. Hennell? I am not quite sure about her direction, but I am anxious to thank her for her kindness in inviting me. Will you also send me an account of Mr. Chapman's prices for lodgers, and if you know anything of other boarding-houses, &c., in London? Will you tell me what you can? I am not asking you merely for the sake of giving you trouble. I am really anxious to know. Oh the dismal weather, and the dismal country, and the dismal people. It was some envious demon that drove me across the Jura. However, I am determined to sell everything I possess, except a portmanteau and carpet-bag and the necessary contents, and be a stranger and a foreigner on the earth for evermore. But I must see you first; that is a yearning I still have in spite of disappointments.

From Griff she went to stay with her sister, Mrs Clarke, at Meriden, whence she writes:

Letter to Mrs. Bray, 24th April, 1850.

Have you any engagement for the week after next? If not, may I join you on Saturday the 4th, and invite M. D'Albert to come down on the following Monday? It appears he cannot stay in England longer than until about the second week in May. I am uncomfortable at the idea of burthening even your friendship with the entertainment of a person purely for my sake. It is indeed the greatest of all the great kindnesses you have shown me. Write me two or three kind words, dear Cara. I have been so ill at ease ever since I have been in

England that I am quite discouraged. Dear Chrissey is generous and sympathising, and really cares for my happiness.

On the 4th of May Miss Evans went to Rosehill, and on the 7th M. D'Albert joined the party for a three days' visit. The strong affection existing between Mr. and Mrs. Bray and their guest, and the more congenial intellectual atmosphere surrounding them, led Miss Evans to make her home practically at Rosehill for the next sixteen months. She stayed there continuously till the 18th November, and, among other things, wrote a review of Mackay's "Progress of the Intellect." In October Mr. Mackay and Mr. Chapman, who was then negotiating for the purchase of the "Westminster Review," came to stay at Rosehill, and there was probably some talk then about her assisting in the editorial work of the "Review," but it was not until the following spring that any definite understanding on this subject was arrived at. Meantime the article on Mackay's "Progress of the Intellect" came out in the January, 1851, number of the "Westminster." It contains the following remarkable passages:

"Our civilisation, and yet more, our religion, are an anomalous blending of lifeless barbarisms, which have descended to us like so many petrifactions from distant ages, with living ideas, the offspring of a true process of development. We are in bondage to terms and conceptions, which, having had their roots in conditions of thought no longer existing, have ceased to possess any vitality, and are for us as spells which have lost their virtue. The endeavour to spread enlightened ideas is perpetually counteracted by these *idola theatri*, which have allied themselves on the one hand with men's better sentiments, and on the other with institutions in whose defence are arrayed the passions and the interests of dominant classes. Now, al-

though the teaching of positive truth is the grand means of expelling error, the process will be very much quickened if the negative argument serve as its pioneer; if, by a survey of the past, it can be shown how each age and each race has had a faith and a symbolism suited to its need and its stage of development, and that for succeeding ages to dream of retaining the spirit along with the forms of the past, is as futile as the embalming of the dead body in the hope that it may one day be resumed by the living soul. . . . It is Mr. Mackay's faith that divine revelation is not contained exclusively or pre-eminently in the facts and inspirations of any one age or nation, but is co-extensive with the history of human development, and is perpetually unfolding itself to our widened experience and investigation, as firmament upon firmament becomes visible to us in proportion to the power and range of our exploring instruments. The master-key to this revelation is the recognition of the presence of undeviating law in the material and moral world, — of that invariability of sequence which is acknowledged to be the basis of physical science, but which is still perversely ignored in our social organisation, our ethics, and our religion. It is this invariability of sequence which can alone give value to experience, and render education, in the true sense, possible. The divine yea and nay, the seal of prohibition and of sanction, are effectually impressed on human deeds and aspirations, not by means of Greek and Hebrew, but by that inexorable law of consequences, whose evidence is confirmed instead of weakened as the ages advance; and human duty is comprised in the earnest study of this law and patient obedience to its teaching. While this belief sheds a

bright beam of promise on the future career of our race, it lights up what once seemed the dreariest region of history with new interest; every past phase of human development is part of that education of the race in which we are sharing; every mistake, every absurdity into which poor human nature has fallen, may be looked on as an experiment of which we may reap the benefit. A correct generalisation gives significance to the smallest detail, just as the great inductions of geology demonstrate in every pebble the working of laws by which the earth has become adapted for the habitation of man. In this view, religion and philosophy are not merely conciliated, they are identical; or rather, religion is the crown and consummation of philosophy, — the delicate corolla which can only spread out its petals in all their symmetry and brilliance to the sun, when root and branch exhibit the conditions of a healthy and vigorous life."

Miss Evans seems to have been in London from the beginning of January till the end of March, 1851; and Mr. Chapman made another fortnight's visit to Rosehill at the end of May and beginning of June. It was during this period that, with Miss Evans's assistance, the prospectus of the new series of the "Westminster Review" was determined on and put in shape. At the end of July she went with Mrs. Bray to visit Mr. Edward Noel, at Bishop Steignton, in Devonshire. Mrs. Bray had some slight illness there, and Miss Evans writes: —

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 5th Aug. 1851.

I am grieved indeed if anything might have been written, which has not been written, to allay your anxiety about Cara. Her letter yesterday explained what has been the matter. I knew her own handwriting would be pleasanter to you than any other. I have been

talking to her this morning about the going to London or to Rosehill. She seems to prefer London. A glance or two at the Exposition, she thinks, would do her no harm. To-day we are all going to Teignmouth. She seems to like the idea of sitting by the waves. The sun is shining gloriously, and all things are tolerably promising. I am going to walk on before the rest and have a bath.

They went to London on the 13th of August, saw the Crystal Palace, and returned to Rosehill on the 16th. At the end of that month, Mr. George Combe (the distinguished phrenologist) arrived on a visit, and he and Mrs. Combe became good friends to Miss Evans, as will be seen from the subsequent correspondence. They came on a second visit to Rosehill the following month, — Mr. Chapman being also in the house at the same time, — and at the end of September Miss Evans went to stay with the Chapmans at No. 142 Strand, as a boarder, and as assistant editor of the "Westminster Review." A new period now opens in George Eliot's life, and emphatically the most important period, for now she is to be thrown in contact with Mr. Lewes, who is to exercise so paramount an influence on all her future, with Mr. Herbert Spencer, and with a number of writers then reprcsenting the most fearless and advanced thought of the day. Miss Frederica Bremer, the authoress, was also boarding with the Chapmans at this time, as will be seen from the following letters: —

Letter to the Brays, end of Sept. 1851.

Mr. Mackay has been very kind in coming and walking out with me, and that is the only variety I have had. Last night, however, we had an agreeable enough gathering. Foxton [1] came, who, you know, is try-

[1] Frederick Foxton, author of "Popular Christianity: its Transition State and Probable Development."

ing, with Carlyle and others, to get a chapel for Wilson at the West End, — in which he is to figure as a seceding clergyman. I enclose you two notes from Empson (he is the editor of the "Edinburgh Review") as a guarantee that I have been trying to work. Again, I proposed to write a review of Greg for the "Westminster," not for money, but for love of the subject as connected with the "Inquiry." Mr. Hickson referred the matter to Slack again, and he writes that he shall not have room for it, and that the subject will not suit on this occasion, so you see I am obliged to be idle, and I like it best. I hope Mr. Bray is coming soon to tell me everything about you. I think I shall cry for joy to see him. But do send me a little note on Monday morning. Mrs. Follen called the other day in extreme horror at Miss Martineau's book.

Letter to Mr. Bray, end of Sept. 1851.

Dr. Brabant returned to Bath yesterday. He very politely took me to the Crystal Palace, the theatre, and the Overland Route. On Friday we had Foxton, Wilson, and some other nice people, among others a Mr. Herbert Spencer, who has just brought out a large work on "Social Statics," which Lewes pronounces the best book he has seen on the subject. You must see the book if possible. Mr. Chapman is going to send you Miss Martineau's work, or rather Mr. Atkinson's,[1] which you must review in the "Herald." Whatever else one may think of the book, it is certainly the boldest I have seen in the English language. I get nothing done here, there are so many *distractions*, — moreover I have hardly been well a day since I came. I wish I were rich enough to go to the coast, and

[1] "Man's Nature and Development," by Martineau and Atkinson.

have some plunges in the sea to brace me. Nevertheless do not suppose that I don't enjoy being here. I like seeing the new people, &c., and I am afraid I shall think the country rather dull after it. I am in a hurry to-day. I must have two hours' work before dinner; so imagine everything I have not said, or rather reflect that this scrap is quite as much as you deserve after being so slow to write to me.

The reference, in the above letter, to Mr. Lewes must not be taken as indicating personal acquaintance yet. It is only a quotation of some opinion heard or read. Mr. Lewes had already secured for himself a wide reputation in the literary world by his "Biographical History of Philosophy," his two novels, "Ranthorpe," and "Rose, Blanche, and Violet," — all of which had been published five or six years before, — and his voluminous contributions to the periodical literature of the day. He was also at this time the literary editor of the "Leader" newspaper, so that any criticism of his would carry weight and be talked about. Much has already been written about his extraordinary versatility, the variety of his literary productions, his social charms, his talent as a raconteur, *and his dramatic faculty; and it will now be interesting, for those who did not know him personally, to learn the deeper side of his character, which will be seen, in its development, in the following pages.*

I don't know how long Miss Bremer will stay, but you need not wish to see her. She is to me equally unprepossessing to eye and ear. I never saw a person of her years who appealed less to my purely instinctive veneration. I have to reflect every time I look at her that she is really Frederica Bremer.

Fox is to write the article on the Suffrage, and we are going to try Carlyle for the Peerage, Ward refusing on the ground that he thinks the improve-

ment of the physical condition of the people so all-important that he must give all his energies to that. He says, "Life is a bad business, but we must make the best of it;" to which philosophy I say Amen. Dr. Hodgson is gone, and all the fun with him.

I was introduced to Lewes the other day in Jeff's shop, — a sort of miniature Mirabeau in appearance.[1]

Professor Forbes is to write us a capital scientific article, whereat I rejoice greatly. The Peerage apparently will not "get itself done," as Carlyle says. It is not an urgent question, nor does one see that, if the undue influence of the Peers on the elections for the Commons were done away with, there would be much mischief from the House of Lords remaining for some time longer *in statu quo*. I have been reading Carlyle's "Life of Sterling" with great pleasure, — not for its presentation of Sterling, but of Carlyle. There are racy bits of description in his best manner, and exquisite touches of feeling. Little rapid characterisations of living men too, — of Francis Newman, for example, — "a man of fine university and other attainments, of the sharpest cutting, and most restlessly advancing intellect, and of the mildest pious enthusiasm." There is an inimitable description of Coleridge and his eternal monologue, — "To sit as a passive bucket and be pumped into, whether one like it or not, can in the end be exhilarating to no creature."

Letter to the Brays, 2d Oct. (?) 1851.

All the world is doing its *devoir* to the great

[1] This was a merely formal and casual introduction. That George Eliot was ever brought into close relations with Mr. Lewes was due to Mr. Herbert Spencer having taken him to call on her in the Strand later in this year.

little authoress (Miss Bremer). I went to the Exhibition on Saturday to hear the final "God save the Queen" and the three times three, — "C'était un beau moment." Mr. Greg thought the review "well done, and in a kindly spirit," but thought there was not much in it, — dreadfully true, since there was only all his book. I think he did not like the apology for his want of theological learning, which, however, was just the thing most needed, for the "Eclectic" trips him up on that score. Carlyle was very amusing the other morning to Mr. Chapman about the Exhibition. He has no patience with the Prince and "that Cole" assembling Sawneys from all parts of the land, till you can't get along Piccadilly. He has been worn to death with bores all summer, who present themselves by twos and threes in his study, saying, "Here we are," &c., &c.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 15th Oct. 1851.

I wish you could see Miss Bremer's albums, full of portraits, flowers, and landscapes, all done by herself. A portrait of Emerson, marvellously like; one of Jenny Lind, &c. Last night we had quite a charming *soirée*, — Sir David Brewster and his daughter; Mackay, author of a work on popular education, you may remember to have seen reviewed in the "Leader;" the Ellises, the Hodgsons, and half-a-dozen other nice people. Miss Bremer was more genial than I have seen her, — played on the piano, and smiled benevolently. Altogether, I am beginning to repent of my repugnance. Mackay approves our prospectus *in toto*. He is a handsome, fine-headed man, and a "good opinion." We are getting out a circular to accompany the prospectus. I have been kept downstairs by Mr. Mackay for

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 19th Oct. 1851.

the last two hours, and am hurried, but it was a necessity to write *ein paar Worte* to you. Mr. Mackay has written an account of his book for the catalogue. I have been using my powers of eloquence and flattery this morning to make him begin an article on the "Development of Protestantism." Mr. Ellis was agreeable, — really witty. He and Mrs. Ellis particularly cordial to me, inviting me to visit them without ceremony. I love you all better every day, and better the more I see of other people. I am going to one of the Birkbeck schools.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 3d Nov. 1851.

I must tell you a story Miss Bremer got from Emerson. Carlyle was very angry with him for not believing in a devil, and to convert him took him amongst all the horrors of London, — the gin-shops, &c., — and finally to the House of Commons, plying him at every turn with the question, "Do you believe in a devil noo?" There is a severe attack on Carlyle's "Life of Sterling" in yesterday's "Times," — unfair as an account of the book, but with some truth in its general remarks about Carlyle. There is an article, evidently by James Martineau, in the "Prospective," which you must read, "On the Unity of the Logical and Intuitive in the ultimate grounds of Religious Belief." I am reading with great amusement (!) J. H. Newman's "Lectures on the Position of Catholics." They are full of clever satire and description. My table is groaning with books, and I have done very little with them yet, but I trust in my star, which has hitherto helped me, to do all I have engaged to do. Pray remember to send the MS. translation of Schleiermacher's little book, and also the book itself.

When Mr. Noel had finished his farewell visit to-day, Mr. Flower was announced, so my morning has run away in chat. Time wears, and I don't get on so fast as I ought, but I must scribble a word or two, else you will make my silence an excuse for writing me no word of yourselves. I am afraid Mr. Noel and Mr. Bray have given you a poor report of me. The last two days I have been a little better, but I hardly think existing arrangements can last beyond this quarter. Mr. Noel says Miss L. is to visit you at Christmas. I hope that is a mistake, as it would deprive me of my hoped-for rest amongst you.

Letter to the Brays, 15th Nov. 1851.

On Saturday afternoon came Mr. Spencer to ask Mr. Chapman and me to go to the theatre; so I ended the day in a godless manner, seeing the "Merry Wives of Windsor." You must read Carlyle's denunciation of the opera, published in the "Keepsake"! The "Examiner" quotes it at length. I send you the enclosed from Harriet Martineau. Please to return it. The one from Carlyle you may keep till I come. He is a naughty fellow to write in the "Keepsake," and not for us, after I wrote him the most insinuating letter, offering him three glorious subjects. Yesterday we went to Mr. Mackay's, Dr. Brabant being there.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, Monday, 23d Nov. 1851.

Carlyle called the other day, strongly recommending Browning, the poet, as a writer for the "Review," and saying, "We shall see," about himself. In other respects we have been stagnating since Monday, and now I must work, work, work, which I have scarcely done two days consecutively since I have been here. Lewes says his article on "Julia von

Letter to Chas. Bray, 27th Nov. 1851.

Krüdener"[1] will be glorious. He sat in the same box with us at the "Merry Wives of Windsor," and helped to carry off the dolorousness of the play.

Alas! the work is so heavy just for the next three days, all the revises being yet to come in, and the proof of my own article;[2] and Mr. Chapman is so overwhelmed with matters of detail, that he has earnestly requested me to stay till Saturday, and I cannot refuse, but it is a deep disappointment to me. My heart will yearn after you all. It is the first Christmas Day I shall have passed without any Christmas feeling. On Saturday, if you will have me, nothing shall keep me here any longer. I am writing at a high table, on a low seat, in a great hurry. Don't you think my style is editorial?

Letter to the Brays, Tuesday, 22d Dec. 1851.

Accordingly, on Saturday, the 29th December, 1851, she did go down to Rosehill, and stayed there till 12th January, when she returned to London, and writes: —

I had a comfortable journey all alone, except from Weedon to Blisworth. When I saw a coated animal getting into my carriage, I thought of all horrible stories of madmen in railways; but his white neckcloth and thin mincing voice soon convinced me that he was one of those exceedingly tame animals, the clergy.

Letter to Mrs. Bray, 12th Jan. 1852.

A kind welcome and a good dinner, — that is the whole of my history at present. I am in anything but company trim, or spirits. I can do nothing in return for all your kindness, dear Cara, but love you, as I do most heartily. You and all yours, for their own sake first, but if it were not so, for yours.

[1] Appeared in January, 1852, No. of the "Westminster Review," No. 1 of the New Series.

[2] Review of Carlyle's "Life of Sterling" in "Westminster," Jan. 1852.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 21st Jan. 1852.

Harriet Martineau called on Monday morning with Mr. Atkinson. Very kind and cordial. I honour her for her powers and industry, and should be glad to think highly of her. I have no doubt that she is fascinating when there is time for talk. We have had two agreeable *soirées*. Last Monday I was talking and listening for two hours to Pierre Leroux, — a dreamy genius. He was expounding to me his ideas. He belongs neither to the school of Proudhon, which represents Liberty only, — nor to that of Louis Blanc, which represents Equality only, — nor to that of Cabet, which represents Fraternity. Pierre Leroux's system is the *synthèse* which combines all three. He has found the true *pont* which is to unite the love of self with the love of one's neighbour. He is, you know, a very voluminous writer. George Sand has dedicated some of her books to him. He dilated on his views of the "Origin of Christianity." Strauss deficient, because he has not shown the *identity of the teaching of Jesus with that of the Essenes.* This is Leroux's favourite idea. I told him of your brother. He, moreover, traces Essenism back to Egypt, and thence to India, — the cradle of all religions, &c., &c., with much more, which he uttered with an unction rather amusing in a *soirée tête-à-tête.* "Est-ce que nous sommes faits pour chercher le bonheur? Est-ce là votre idée — dites moi." "Mais non, — nous sommes faits, je pense, pour nous développer le plus possible." "Ah! c'est ça." He is in utter poverty, going to lecture, — *autrement il faut mourir.* Has a wife and children with him. He came to London in his early days, when he was twenty-five, — to find work as a printer. All the world was in mourning for the

Princess Charlotte. "Et moi, je me trouvais avoir *un habit vert-pomme.*" So he got no work; went back to Paris; by hook or by crook founded the "Globe" journal; knew St. Simon; disagrees with him entirely, as with all other theorists except Pierre Leroux.

We are trying Mazzini to write on "Freedom *v.* Despotism," and have received an admirable article on "The New Puritanism," [1] *i. e.*, "Physical Puritanism," from Dr. Brown, the chemist, of Edinburgh, which, I think, will go in the next number.

I am in a miserable state of languor and low spirits, in which everything is a trouble to me. I must tell you a bit of Louis Blanc's English, which Mr. Spencer was reciting the other night. The *petit homme* called on some one, and said, "I come to tell you how you are. I was at you the other day, but you were not."

Letter to the Brays, 2d Feb. 1852.

We went to quite a gay party at Mrs. Mackay's on Saturday. Good Mr. Mackay has been taking trouble to get me to Hastings for my health, — calling on Miss Fellowes, daughter of the "Religion of the Universe," and inducing her to write me a note of invitation. Sara will be heartily welcome. Unfortunately I had an invitation to the Parkes', to meet Cobden on Saturday evening. I was sorry to miss that. Miss Parkes [2] is a dear, ardent, honest creature; and I hope we shall be good friends. I have nothing else to tell you. I am steeped in dulness within and without. Heaven send some lions to-night to meet Fox, who is coming. An

[1] Published in the April, 1852, number of the "Westminster."

[2] Now Madame Belloc, who remained to the end one of George Eliot's closest friends.

advertisement we found in the " Times " to-day, — " To gentlemen. A *converted* medical man, of gentlemanly habits and fond of Scriptural conversation, wishes to meet with a gentleman of Calvinistic views, thirsty after truth, in want of a daily companion. A little temporal aid will be expected in return. Address, Verax "!

We are going to Mr. Ellis's, at Champion Hill, to-morrow evening. I am better now. Have rid myself of all distasteful work, and am trying to love the glorious destination of humanity, looking before and after. We shall be glad to have Sara.

Letter to Mrs. Bray, 8th Feb. 1852.

Miss Sara Hennell arrived on a visit to the Strand next day — the 9th February — and stayed till the 17th.

I have not merely had a headache, — I have been really ill, and feel very much shattered. We (Miss Evans and Miss Sara Hennell) dined yesterday at Mrs. Peter Taylor's,[1] at Sydenham. I was not fit to go, especially to make my *début* at a strange place; but the country air was a temptation. The thick of the work is just beginning, and I am bound in honour not to run away from it, as I have shirked all labour but what is strictly editorial this quarter.

Letter to Mr. Bray, 16th Feb. 1852.

We went to the meeting of the Association for the Abolition of the Taxes on Knowledge on Wednesday, that I might hear Cobden, in whom I was wofully disappointed. George Dawson's speech was admirable. I think it undesirable to fix on a London residence

Letter to Mrs. Bray, 20th Feb. 1852.

[1] Mrs. Peter Taylor remained a lifelong and a valued friend of George Eliot's, and many interesting letters in these volumes are addressed to her. I am glad also to take this opportunity of expressing my thanks to her for obtaining for me two other sets of correspondence, — the letters addressed to Mrs. Beecher Stowe and to Mrs. William Smith.

at present, as I want to go to Brighton for a month or two next quarter. I am seriously concerned at my languid body, and feel the necessity of taking some measures to get vigour. Lewes inquired for Sara last Monday in a tone of interest. He was charmed with her, as who would not be that has any taste? Do write to me, dear Cara; I want comforting: this world looks ugly just now; all people rather worse than I have been used to think them. Put me in love with my kind again, by giving me a glimpse of your own inward self, since I cannot see the outer one.

I can sympathise with you in your troubles, having been a housekeeper myself, and known disappointment in trusted servants. Ah, well! we have a good share of the benefits of our civilisation; it is but fair that we should feel some of the burthen of its imperfections.

Letter to Mrs. Peter Taylor, 6th March, 1852.

Thank you a thousand times for wishing to see me again. I should really like to see you in your own nice, fresh, healthy-looking home again; but until the end of March I fear I shall be a prisoner from the necessity for constant work. Still it is possible that I may have a day, though I am quite unable to say when.

You will be still more surprised at the notice of the "Westminster" in "The People," when you know that Maccall himself wrote it. I have not seen it, but had been told of its ill-nature. However, he is too good a man to write otherwise than sincerely; and our opinion of a book often depends on the state of the liver!

I had two offers last night, — not of marriage, but of music, — which I find it impossible to re-

sist. Mr. Herbert Spencer proposed to take me on Thursday to hear "William Tell," and Miss Parkes asked me to go with her to hear the "Creation" on Friday. I have had so little music this quarter, and these two things are so exactly what I should like, that I have determined to put off, for the sake of them, my other pleasure of seeing you. So, pray, keep your precious welcome warm for me until Saturday, when I shall positively set off by the two o'clock train. Harriet Martineau has written me a most cordial invitation to go to see her before July, but that is impossible.

Letter to Mrs. Bray, 25th March, 1852.

I am grieved to find that you have to pay for that fine temperament of yours in attacks of neuralgia. Your silence did not surprise me, after the account you had given me of your domestic circumstances, but I have wished for you on Monday evenings. Your cordial assurance that you shall be glad to see me sometimes is one of those pleasant things — those life-preservers — which relenting destiny sends me now and then to buoy me up. For you must know that I am not a little desponding now and then, and think that old friends will die off, while I shall be left without the power to make new ones. You know how sad one feels when a great procession has swept by one, and the last notes of its music have died away, leaving one alone with the fields and sky. I feel so about life sometimes. It is a help to read such a life as Margaret Fuller's. How inexpressibly touching that passage from her journal, — "I shall always reign through the intellect, but the life! the life! O my God! shall that never be sweet?" I am thankful, as if for myself, that it was sweet at last. But I am running on

Letter to Mrs. Peter Taylor, 27th March, 1852.

about feelings when I ought to tell you facts. I am going on Wednesday to my friends in Warwickshire for about ten days or a fortnight. When I come back, I hope you will be quite strong and able to receive visitors without effort, — Mr. Taylor too.

I *did* go to the *conversazione;* but you have less to regret than you think. Mazzini's speeches are better read than heard Proofs are come demanding my immediate attention, so I must end this hasty scribble.

On the 3d April Miss Evans went to Rosehill, and stayed till the 14th. On her return she writes:

Letter to Mr. Bray, 17th April, 1852.

There was an article on the bookselling affair in the "Times" of yesterday, which must be the knell of the Association. Dickens is to preside at a meeting in this house on the subject some day next week. The opinions on the various articles in the "Review" are, as before, ridiculously various. The "Economist" calls the article on Quakerism "admirably written." Greg says the article on India is "very masterly;" while he calls Mazzini's "sad stuff, — mere verbiage."

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 21st April, 1852.

If there is any change in my affection for you, it is that I love you more than ever, not less. I have as perfect a friendship for you as my imperfect nature can feel, — a friendship in which deep respect and admiration are sweetened by a sort of flesh-and-blood sisterly feeling and the happy consciousness that I have your affection, however undeservedly, in return. I have confidence that this friendship can never be shaken; that it must last while I last, and that the supposition of its ever being weakened

by a momentary irritation is too contemptibly absurd for me to take the trouble to deny it. As to your whole conduct to me, from the first day I knew you, it has been so generous and sympathetic that if I did not heartily love you, I should feel deep gratitude, — but love excludes gratitude. It is impossible that I should ever love two women better than I love you and Cara. Indeed it seems to me that I can never love any so well; and it is certain that I can never have any friend — not even a husband — who would supply the loss of those associations with the past which belong to you. Do believe in my love for you, and that it will remain as long as I have my senses, because it is interwoven with my best nature, and is dependent not on any accidents of manner but on long experience, which has confirmed the instinctive attraction of earlier days.

Our fortunes here are as usual chequered, —

> "Twist ye, twine ye, even so
> Mingle human weal and woe."

Grote is very friendly, and has propitiated J. S. Mill, who will write for us when we want him.

Letter to the Brays, 22d April, 1852.

We had quite a brilliant *soirée* yesterday evening, W. R. Greg, Forster (of Rawdon), Francis Newman, the Ellises, and Louis Blanc were the stars of greatest magnitude. I had a pleasant talk with Greg and Forster. Greg was "much pleased to have made my acquaintance." Forster, on the whole, appeared to think that people should be glad to make *his* acquaintance. Greg is a short man, but his brain is large, the anterior lobe very fine, and a moral region to correspond. Black, wiry, curly hair, and every indication of a first-rate tempera-

ment. We have some very nice Americans here, — the Pughs, friends of the Parkes', really refined, intellectual people. Miss Pugh, an elderly lady, is a great abolitionist, and was one of the Women's Convention that came to England in 1840, and was not allowed to join the Men's Convention. But I suppose we shall soon be able to say, *nous avons changé tout cela.*

I went to the opera on Saturday, — "I Martiri," at Covent Garden, — with my "excellent friend, Herbert Spencer," as Lewes calls him. We have agreed that there is no reason why we should not have as much of each other's society as we like. He is a good, delightful creature, and I always feel better for being with him.

I like to remind you of me on Sunday morning, when you look at the flowers and listen to music; so I send a few lines, though I have not much time to spare to-day. After Tuesday I will write you a longer letter, and tell you all about everything. I am going to the opera to-night to hear the "Huguenots." See what a fine thing it is to pick up people who are short-sighted enough to like one!

Letter to the Brays, 2d May, 1852.

On the 4th of May a meeting, consisting chiefly of authors, was held at the house in the Strand, for the purpose of hastening the removal of the trade restrictions on the Commerce of Literature, and it is thus described in the following letter: —

The meeting last night went off triumphantly, and I saluted Mr. Chapman with "See the Conquering Hero comes" on the piano at 12 o'clock; for not until then was the last magnate, except Herbert Spencer, out of the house. I sat at the door for a short time, but

Letter to the Brays, 5th May, 1852.

soon got a chair within it, and heard and saw everything.

Dickens in the chair, — a position he fills remarkably well, preserving a courteous neutrality of eyebrows, and speaking with clearness and decision. His appearance is certainly disappointing, — no benevolence in the face, and, I think, little in the head, — the anterior lobe not by any means remarkable. In fact, he is not distinguished looking in any way, — neither handsome nor ugly, neither fat nor thin, neither tall nor short. Babbage moved the first resolution, — a bad speaker, but a great authority. Charles Knight is a beautiful, elderly man, with a modest but firm enunciation; and he made a wise and telling speech which silenced one or two vulgar, ignorant booksellers who had got into the meeting by mistake. One of these began by complimenting Dickens, — "views held by such worthy and important gentlemen, *which is your worthy person in the chair*." Dickens looked respectfully neutral. The most telling speech of the evening was Prof. Tom Taylor's, — as witty and brilliant as one of George Dawson's. Professor Owen's, too, was remarkably good. He had a resolution to move as to the bad effect of the trade restrictions on scientific works, and gave his own experience in illustration. Speaking of the slow and small sale of scientific books of a high class, he said, in his silvery bland way, alluding to the boast that the retail booksellers *recommended* the works of less known authors, — "for which limited sale we are doubtless indebted to the kind recommendation of our friends, the retail booksellers," — whereupon these worthies, taking it for a *bonâ fide* compliment, cheered enthusiastically. Dr. Lankester, Prof. Newman, Robert Bell, and

others spoke well. Owen has a tremendous head, and looked, as he was, the greatest celebrity of the meeting. George Cruikshank, too, made a capital speech in an admirable moral spirit. He is the most homely, genuine-looking man, not unlike the pictures of Captain Cuttle.

I went to hear the "Huguenots" on Saturday evening. It was a rich treat. Mario, and Grisi, and Formes, and that finest of orchestras under Costa. I am going to a concert to-night. This is all very fine, but in the meantime I am getting as haggard as an old witch under London atmosphere and influences. I shall be glad to have sent me my Shakspeare, Goethe, Byron, and Wordsworth, if you will be so good as to take the trouble of packing them.

Letter to the Brays, Monday, 12th (?) May, 1852.

My days have slipt away in a most mysterious fashion lately, — chiefly, I suppose, in long walks and long talks. Our Monday evenings are dying off, — not universally regretted, — but we are expecting one or two people to-night. I have nothing to tell except that I went to the opera on Thursday, and heard "La Juive," and, moreover, fell in love with Prince Albert, who was unusually animated and prominent. He has a noble, genial, intelligent expression, and is altogether a man to be proud of. I am going next Thursday to see Grisi in "Norma." She is quite beautiful this season, thinner than she was, and really younger looking.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 27th May, 1852.

My brightest spot, next to my love of *old* friends, is the deliciously calm *new* friendship that Herbert Spencer gives me. We see each other every day, and have a delightful *cameraderie* in everything. But for him my life would be desolate enough. What a wretched

lot of old shrivelled creatures we shall be by-and-by! Never mind, — the uglier we get in the eyes of others, the lovelier we shall be to each other; that has always been my firm faith about friendship, and now it is in a slight degree my experience. Mme. D'Albert has sent me the sweetest letter, just like herself; and I feel grateful to have such a heart remembering and loving me on the other side of the Jura. They are very well and flourishing.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, Wednesday, 2d June, 1852.

I am bothered to death with article-reading and scrap-work of all sorts: it is clear my poor head will never produce anything under these circumstances; *but I am patient.* I am ashamed to tease you so, but I must beg of you to send me George Sand's works; and also I shall be grateful if you will lend me, what I think you have, — an English edition of "Corinne," and Miss Austen's "Sense and Sensibility." Harriet Martineau's article on "Niebuhr" will not go in the July number. I am sorry for it, — it is admirable. After all, she is a *trump*, — the only Englishwoman that possesses thoroughly the art of writing.

On Thursday morning I went to St. Paul's to see the Charity children assembled, and hear their singing. Berlioz says it is the finest thing he has heard in England; and this opinion of his induced me to go. I was not disappointed, — it is worth doing once, especially as we got out before the sermon. I had a long call from George Combe yesterday. He says he thinks the "Westminster," under *my* management, the most important means of enlightenment of a literary nature in existence, — the "Edinburgh," under Jeffrey, nothing to it, &c. !!! I wish *I* thought so too.

Your joint assurance of welcome strengthens the centripetal force that would carry me to you; but, on the other hand, sundry considerations are in favour of the centrifugal force, which, I suppose, will carry me to Broadstairs or Ramsgate. On the whole, I prefer to keep my visit to you as a *bonne bouche*, when I am just in the best physical and mental state for enjoying it. I hope to get away on Saturday, or on Wednesday at the latest. I think the third number of the "Review" will be capital, — thoroughly readable, and yet not frothy.

Letter to the Brays, 21st June, 1852.

I have assured Herbert Spencer that you will think it a sufficiently formal answer to the invitation you sent him through Mr. Lewes, if I tell you that he will prefer waiting for the pleasure of a visit to you until I am with you, — if you will have him then. I spent the evening at Mr. Parkes's on Monday. Yesterday Herbert Spencer brought his father to see me, — a large-brained, highly informed man, with a certain quaintness and simplicity, altogether very pleasing.

Letter to Chas. Bray, 23d June, 1852.

After all, I begin to hope that our next number will be the best yet. Forbes is good. Froude ditto; and James Martineau, if I may judge from a glance at a few of his pages, admirable. Lewes has written us an agreeable article on Lady Novelists. There is a mysterious contribution to the Independent section. We are hoping that an article on Edinburgh Literary Men, yet to come, will be very good. If not, we shall put in Niebuhr; it is capital.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 25th June, (?) 1852.

The opera, Chiswick Flower Show, the French play, and the Lyceum, all in one week, brought

their natural consequences of headache and hysterics, — all yesterday. At five o'clock I felt quite sure that life was unendurable. This morning, however, the weather and I are both better, having cried ourselves out and used up all our clouds; and I can even contemplate living six months longer. Was there ever anything more dreary than this June?

Letter to the Brays, end of June, 1852.

I am busy packing to-day, and am going to Mr. Parkes's to dinner. Miss Parkes has introduced me to Barbara Smith,[1] whose expression I like exceedingly, and hope to know more of her. I go to Broadstairs on Saturday. I am sadly in want of the change, and would much rather present myself to you all when I can do you more credit as a friend.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, Friday morning, 2d July, 1852.

I warn you against Ramsgate, which is a strip of London come out for an airing. Broadstairs is perfect; and I have the snuggest little lodging conceivable, with a motherly good woman and a nice little damsel of fourteen to wait on me. There are only my two rooms in this cottage, but lodgings are plentiful in the place. I have a sitting-room about 8 feet by 9, and a bedroom a little larger; yet in that small space there is almost every comfort. I pay a guinea a week for my rooms, so I shall not ruin myself by staying a month, unless I commit excesses in coffee and sugar. I am thinking whether it would not be wise to retire from the world and live here for the rest of my days. With some fresh paper on the walls and an easy-chair, I think I

Letter to Mrs. Bray, 4th July, 1852.

[1] Afterwards Madame Bodichon, — one of the three or four most intimate friends of George Eliot, whose name will very often appear in subsequent pages.

could resign myself. Come and tell me your opinion.

I thought of you last night, when I was in a state of mingled rapture and torture, — rapture at the sight of a glorious evening sky, torture at the sight and hearing of the belabouring given to the poor donkey which was drawing me from Ramsgate home.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 16th July, 1852.

I had a note from Miss Florence Nightingale yesterday. I was much pleased with her. There is a loftiness of mind about her which is well expressed by her form and manner. Glad you are pleased with the "Westminster." I do think it a rich number, — matter for a fortnight's reading and thought. Lewes has not half done it justice in the "Leader." To my mind the Niebuhr article is as good as any of them. If you could see me in my quiet nook! I am half ashamed of being in such clover, both spiritually and materially, while some of my friends are on the dusty highways, without a tuft of grass or a flower to cheer them. A letter from you will be delightful. We seem to have said very little to each other lately. But I always know — rejoice to know — that there is the same Sara for me as there is the same green earth and arched sky, when I am good and wise enough to like the best thing.

Do not be anxious about me, — there is no cause. I am profiting, body and mind, from quiet walks and talks with nature, gathering "Lady's Bedstraw" and "Rest-harrow," and other pretty things; picking up shells (not in the Newtonian sense, but literally); reading Aristotle, to find out what is the chief good; and eating mutton-chops, that I may have strength to pursue it. If you insist on my

Letter to Chas. Bray, 21st July, 1852.

writing about "Emotions," why, I must get some up expressly for the purpose. But I must own I would rather not, for it is the grand wish and object of my life to get rid of them as far as possible, seeing they have already had more than their share of my nervous energy. I shall not be in town on the 2d of August, — at least I pray heaven to forbid it.

Mrs. Bray paid a visit to Broadstairs from the 3d to the 12th August, and the next letter is addressed to her.

Letter to Mrs. Bray, Thursday, 14th (?) Aug. 1852.

Are you really the better for having been here? Since you left, I have been continually regretting that I could not make your visit pleasanter. I was irritable and out of sorts; but you have an apparatus for secreting happiness, that 's it. Providence, seeing that I wanted weaning from this place, has sent a swarm of harvest-bugs and lady-birds. These, with the half-blank, half-dissipated feeling which comes on after having companions and losing them, make me think of returning to London on Saturday week with more resignation than I have felt before. I am very well and "plucky," — a word which I propose to substitute for "happy," as more truthful.

Letter to Mrs. Peter Taylor, 19th Aug. 1852.

For the last two months I have been at this pretty, quiet place, which "David Copperfield" has made classic, far away from London noise and smoke.

I am sorry now that I brought with me Fox's Lectures, which I had not managed to read before I left town. But I shall return thither at the end of next week, and I will at once forward the volume to Cary Lane.

One sees no novels less than a year old at the sea-side, so I am unacquainted with the "Blithe-

dale Romance," except through the reviews, which have whetted my curiosity more than usual. Hawthorne is a grand favourite of mine, and I shall be sorry if he do not go on surpassing himself. It is sad to hear of your only going out to consult a physician. Illness seems to me the one woe for which there is no comfort, — no compensation. But perhaps you find it otherwise, for you have a less rebellious spirit than I, and suffering seems to make you look all the more gentle.

Letter to Mrs. Houghton, 22d Aug. 1852.

Thinking of you this morning, — as I often do, though you may not suppose so, — it was "borne in on my mind" that I must write to you, and I obey the inspiration without waiting to consider whether there may be a corresponding desire on your part to hear from me. I live in a world of cares and joys, so remote from the one in which we used to sympathise with each other, that I find positive communication with you difficult. But I am not unfaithful to old loves, — they were sincere, and they are lasting. I hope you will not think it too much trouble to write me a little news of yourself. I want very much to know if your health continues good, and if there has been any change in your circumstances, that I may have something like a true conception of you. All is well with me so far as my individuality is concerned, — but I have plenty of friends' troubles to sorrow over. I hope you have none to add to the number.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 29th Aug. 1852.

I celebrated my return to London by the usual observance, — that is to say, a violent headache, which is not yet gone, and of course I am in the worst spirits, and my opinion of things is not worth a straw. I tell you this that you may know why I only send you

this scrap instead of the long letter which I have *in petto* for you, and which would otherwise have been written yesterday.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 2d Sept. 1852.

Somehow my letters — except those which come under the inexorable imperative *must* (the "ought" I manage well enough to shirk) — will not get written. The fact is, I am in a croaking mood, and I am waiting and waiting for it to pass by; so if my pen croaks in spite of my resolutions to the contrary, please to take no notice of it. Ever since I came back, I have felt something like the madness which imagines that the four walls are contracting and going to crush one. Harriet Martineau (in a private letter shown to me), with incomprehensible ignorance, jeers at Lewes for introducing *psychology* as a science in his Comte papers. Why, Comte himself holds psychology to be a necessary link in the chain of science. Lewes only suggests a change in its relations. There is a great dreary article on the Colonies by my side asking for reading and abridgment, so I cannot go on scribbling, — indeed my hands are so hot and tremulous this morning that it will be better for you if I leave off. Your little loving notes are very precious to me; but I say nothing about matters of feeling till my good genius has returned from his excursions: the evil one has possession just now.

Letter to Mrs. Bray, 11th Sept. 1852.

The week has really yielded nothing worth telling you. I am a few degrees more wizened and muddle-headed; and the articles for the "Review" are on the whole unsatisfactory. I fear a discerning public will think this number a sad falling off. This is the greater pity, that said public is patronising us well at present. Scarcely a day passes that some

one does not write to order the "Review" as a permanent subscriber. You may as well expect news from an old spider or bat as from me. I can only tell you what I think of the "Blithedale Romance," of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and the American Fishery Dispute, — all which, I am very sure, you don't want to know. Do have pity on me, and make a little variety in my life, by all sending me a scrap, — never mind if it be only six lines apiece. Perhaps something will befall me one day or other. As it is, nothing happens to me but the ringing of the dinner-bell and the arrival of a proof. I have no courage to walk out.

Letter to Chas. Bray, 18th Sept. 1852.

Lewes called on me the other day, and told me of a conversation with Professor Owen, in which the latter declared his conviction that the cerebrum was not the organ of the mind, but the cerebellum rather. He founds on the enormous comparative size of brain in the grampus! The professor has a huge anterior lobe of his own. What would George Combe say if I were to tell him? But every great man has his paradox, and that of the first anatomist in Europe ought to be a startling one.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, Saturday, Sept. 1852.

We shall make a respectable figure after all, — nine articles, and two or three of them good, the rest not bad. The "Review" has been selling well lately, in spite of its being the end of the quarter. We have made splendid provision for January, — Froude, Harriet Martineau, Theodore Parker, Samuel Brown, &c., &c. The autumnal freshness of the mornings makes me dream of mellowing woods and gossamer threads. I am really longing for my journey. Bessie Parkes spent last evening with me chatting of experience.

Letter to the Brays, 2d Oct. 1852.

Pity me, — I have had the headache for four days incessantly. But now I am well, and even the Strand seems an elysium by contrast. I set off on Tuesday for Edinburgh by express. This is awfully expensive, but it seems the only way of reaching there alive with my frail body. I have had the kindest notes from the Combes and from Harriet Martineau.

Letter to the Brays, 7th Oct. 1852.

Here I am in this beautiful Auld Reekie once more, — hardly recognising myself for the same person as the *damozel* who left it by the coach with a heavy heart some six years ago. The Combes are all kindness, and I am in clover, — an elegant house, glorious fires, and a comfortable carriage, — in short, just in the circumstances to nourish sleek optimism, convince one that this is *le meilleur des mondes possibles,* and make one shudder at the impiety of all who doubt it. Last evening Mr. Robert Cox came to tea to be introduced to me as my *cicerone* through the lions of Edinburgh. The talk last night was pleasant enough, though of course all the interlocutors besides Mr. Combe have little to do but shape elegant modes of negation and affirmation, like the people who are talked to by Socrates in Plato's dialogues, — "Certainly," "That I firmly believe," &c. I have a beautiful view from my room window, — masses of wood, distant hills, the Firth, and four splendid buildings, dotted far apart, — not an ugly object to be seen. When I look out in the morning, it is as if I had waked up in Utopia or Icaria, or one of Owen's parallelograms. The weather is perfect, — all the more delightful to me for its northern sharpness, which is just what I wanted to brace me. I have been out walking and

driving all day, and have only time before dinner to send this *paar Worte*, but I may have still less time to-morrow.

Letter to the Brays, 12th Oct. 1852.

Between the beauty of the weather and the scenery, and the kindness of good people, I am tipsy with pleasure. But I shall tell you nothing of what I see and do, because that would be taking off some of the edge from your pleasure in seeing me. One's dear friend who has nothing at all to tell one is a bore. Is it not so, honour bright? I enjoy talking to Mr. Combe, — he can tell me many things, especially about men in America and elsewhere, which are valuable; and besides, I sometimes manage to get in more than a negative or affirmative. He and Mrs. Combe are really affectionate to me, and the mild warmth of their regard, with the perfect order and elegance of everything about me, are just the soothing influence to do me good. They urge me to stay longer, but I shall adhere to my original determination of going to Miss Martineau's on the 20th, and I do not *mean* to stay with her longer than the 25th. We are going to-day to Craigcrook (Jeffrey's place), a beautiful spot, which old October has mellowed into his richest tints. Such a view of Edinburgh from it!

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 12th Oct. 1852.

Those who know the article on Whewell to be Mill's, generally think it good, but I confess to me it is unsatisfactory. The sun *does* shine here, albeit this is the 12th October. I wish you could see the view from Salisbury Crag.

Yes, he is an apostle. An apostle, it is true, with a back and front drawing-room, but still earnest, convinced, consistent, having fought a good fight, and now peacefully enjoying the re-

trospect of it. I shall leave these good friends with regret, almost with repentings, that I did not determine to pay them a longer visit. I have had a pleasant note from Miss Martineau this morning, with a vignette of her house, — I suppose to make me like all the better the idea of going there.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 19th Oct. 1852.

The coach brought me to Miss Martineau's gate at half-past six yesterday evening, and she was there with a beaming face, to welcome me. Mr. Atkinson joined us this morning, and is a very agreeable addition. There has been an intelligent gentleman visitor today, who is interested in Miss Martineau's building society; and we have been trudging about looking at cottages, and enjoying the sight of the mountains, in spite of the rain and mist. The weather is not promising, that is the worst of it. Miss M. is charming in her own home, — quite handsome from her animation and intelligence. She came behind me, put her hands round me, and kissed me in the prettiest way this evening, telling me she was so glad she had got me here. I send you her note that you may have an idea of "The Knoll."

Letter to the Brays, Thursday night, 22d Oct. 1852.

We had a fine day yesterday, and went to Borrowdale. I have not been well since I have been here. Still I manage to enjoy, certainly not myself, but my companions and the scenery. I shall set off from here on Tuesday morning, and shall be due at the Coventry station, I believe, at 5.50.

Letter to the Brays, 24th Oct. 1852.

After a pleasant ten days' visit to Rosehill, Miss Evans returned to London on the 3d November.

To get into a first-class carriage, fall asleep, and awake to find oneself where one would be, is al-

most as good as having Prince Hussein's carpet. This was my easy way of getting to London on Thursday. By 5 o'clock I had unpacked my boxes and made my room tidy, and then I began to feel some satisfaction in being settled down where I am of most use just now. After dinner came Herbert Spencer, and spent the evening. Yesterday morning Mr. Greg called on his way to Paris, to express his regret that he did not see me at Ambleside. He is very pleasing, but somehow or other he frightens me dreadfully. I am going to plunge into Thackeray's novel now ("Esmond").

Letter to the Brays, 6th Nov. 1852.

Oh this hideous fog! Let me grumble, for I have had headache the last three days, and there seems little prospect of anything else in such an atmosphere. I am ready to vow that I will not live in the Strand again after Christmas. If I were not choked by the fog, the time would trot pleasantly withal; but of what use are brains and friends when one lives in a light such as might be got in the chimney? "Esmond" is the most uncomfortable book you can imagine. You remember how you disliked "François le Champi." Well, the story of "Esmond" is just the same. The hero is in love with the daughter all through the book, and marries the mother at the end. You should read the debates on the opening of Parliament in the "Times." Lord Brougham, the greatest of English orators, perpetrates the most delicious *non sequitur* I have seen for a long time. "My lords, I believe that any disturbance of the repose of the world is very remote, *because it is our undeniable right and an unquestionable duty* to be prepared with the means of defence, should such an event occur." These be thy gods, O Israel!

Letter to the Brays, Saturday, Nov. (?) 1852.

I perceive your reading of the golden rule is "Do as you are done by;" and I shall be wiser than to expect a letter from you another Monday morning, when I have not earned it by my Saturday's billet. The fact is, both callers and work thicken, — the former sadly interfering with the latter. I will just tell you how it was last Saturday, and that will give you an idea of my days. My task was to read an article of Greg's in the "North British" on Taxation, a heap of newspaper articles, and all that J. S. Mill says on the same subject. When I had got some way into this *magnum mare*, in comes Mr. Chapman, with a thick German volume. "Will you read enough of this to give me your opinion of it?" Then of course I must have a walk after lunch, and when I had sat down again, thinking that I had two clear hours before dinner, rap at the door, — Mr. Lewes, who, of course, sits talking till the second bell rings. After dinner another visitor, and so behold me, at 11 P. M., still very far at sea on the subject of Taxation, but too tired to keep my eyes open. We had Bryant the poet last evening, — a pleasant, quiet, elderly man. Do you know of this second sample of plagiarism by Disraeli, detected by the "Morning Chronicle"?[1] It is worth sending for its cool impudence. Write me some news about trade, at all events. I could tolerate even Louis Napoleon, if somehow or other he could have a favourable influence on the Coventry trade!

Letter to the Brays, Monday, 20th Nov. 1852.

Another week almost "with the years beyond the flood"! What has it brought you? To me it has brought articles to read, — for the most part satisfactory,

Letter to the Brays, 4th Dec. 1852.

[1] Funeral oration on the Duke of Wellington.

— new callers, and letters to nibble at my time, and a meeting of the Association for the Abolition of Taxes on Knowledge. I am invited to go to the Leigh Smiths' on Monday evening to meet Mr. Robert Noel. Herbert Spencer is invited too, because Mr. Noel wants especially to see him. Barbara Smith speaks of Mr. R. Noel as their "dear German friend." So the Budget is come out, and I am to pay income-tax. All very right, of course. An enlightened personage like me has no "ignorant impatience of taxation." I am glad to hear of the Lectures to Young Men and the banquet of the Labourers' Friend Society. "Be not weary in well-doing." Thanks to Sara for her letter. She must not mind paying the income-tax: it is a right principle that Dizzy is going upon; and with her great conscientiousness she ought to enjoy being flayed on a right principle.

Letter to the Brays, 10th Dec. 1852.

I am not well, — all out of sorts, — and what do you think I am minded to do? Take a return ticket, and set off by the train to-morrow 12 o'clock, have a talk with you and a blow over the hill, and come back relieved on Monday. I the rather indulge myself in this, because I think I shall not be able to be with you until some time after Christmas. Pray forgive me for not sending you word before. I have only just made up my mind.

This visit to Rosehill lasted only from the 11th to 13th December, and the following short note is the next communication: —

Letter to Chas. Bray, 19th (?) Dec. 1852.

I am very wretched to-day on many accounts, and am only able to write you two or three lines. I have heard this morning that Mr. Clarke is dangerously ill. Poor

Chrissey and her children! Thank you for your kind letter.

Letter to Chas. Bray, 21st Dec. 1852.

I daresay you will have heard, before you receive this, that Edward Clarke is dead. I am to go to the funeral, which will take place on Friday. I am debating with myself as to what I ought to do now for poor Chrissey, but I must wait until I have been on the spot and seen my brother. If you hear no more from me, I shall trust to your goodness to give me a bed on Thursday night.

Letter to the Brays, Christmas Day, 25th Dec. 1852, from Meriden.

Your love and goodness are a comforting presence to me everywhere, whether I am ninety or only nine miles away from you. Chrissey bears her trouble much better than I expected. We hope that an advantageous arrangement may be made about the practice; and there is a considerable sum in debts to be collected. I shall return to town on Wednesday. It would have been a comfort to see you again before going back, but there are many reasons for not doing so. I am satisfied now that my duties do not lie *here*, though the dear creatures here will be a constant motive for work and economy.

Letter to the Brays, 31st Dec. 1852.

I arrived here only yesterday. I had agreed with Chrissey that, all things considered, it was wiser for me to return to town, — that I could do her no substantial good by staying another week, while I should be losing time as to other matters.

Letter to the Brays, 7th Jan. 1853.

I am out of spirits about the "Review." I should be glad to run away from it altogether. But one thing is clear, that it would be a great deal worse if I were not here. This is the only thought that consoles

me. We are thinking of sending Chrissey's eldest boy to Australia. A patient of his father's has offered to place him under suitable protection at Adelaide, and I strongly recommend Chrissey to accept her offer, — that is, if she will let it be available a year hence; so I have bought Sidney's book on Australia, and am going to send it to Chrissey to enlighten her about matters there, and accustom her mind to the subject. You are "jolly," I daresay, as good people have a right to be. Tell me as much of your happiness as you can, that I may rejoice in your joy, having none of my own.

I begin to feel for other people's wants and sorrows a little more than I used to do. Heaven help us! said the old religion; the new one, from its very lack of that faith, will teach us all the more to help one another. Tell Sara she is as good as a group of spice islands to me; she wafts the pleasantest influences, even from a distance.

Letter to the Brays, Jan. 1853.

Pray do not lay the sins of the article on the Atomic theory to poor Lewes's charge. How you could take it for his I cannot conceive. It is as remote from his style, both of thinking and writing, as anything can be.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 10th Jan. 1853.

This week has yielded nothing to me but a crop of very large headaches. The pain has gone from my head at last; but I am feeling very much shattered, and find it easier to cry than to do anything else.

Letter to the Brays, 18th Jan. 1853.

My complaint, of which I am now happily rid, was rheumatism in the right arm, — a sufficient reason, you will see, for my employing a scribe to write that promise which I now fulfil. I am going into the country, perhaps for a fortnight, so that if you are kind

Letter to Mrs. Peter Taylor, 1st Feb. 1853.

enough to come here on Wednesday evening, I shall not have the pleasure of seeing you. All the more reason for writing to you, in spite of cold feet and the vilest pens in the world.

Francis Newman is likely to come once or twice in the season, — not more. He has, of course, a multitude of engagements, and many more attractive ones than a *soirée* in the Strand.

Never mention me to him in the character of Editress. I think — at least I am told — that he has no high estimate of woman's powers and functions. But let that pass. He is a very pure, noble being, and it is good only to look at such.

The article on Slavery, in the last number of the "Westminster," — which I think the best article of them all, — is by W. E. Forster, a Yorkshire manufacturer, who married Dr. Arnold's daughter. He is a very earnest, independent thinker, and worth a gross of literary hacks who have the "trick" of writing.

I hope you are interested in the Slavery question, and in America generally, — that cradle of the future. I used resolutely to turn away from American politics, and declare that the United States was the last region of the world I should care to visit. Even now I almost loathe the *common* American type of character. But I am converted to a profound interest in the history, the laws, the social and religious phases of North America, and long for some knowledge of them.

Is it not cheering to think of the youthfulness of this little planet, and the immensely greater youthfulness of our race upon it? — to think that the higher moral tendencies of human nature are yet only in their germ? I feel this more thoroughly when I think of that great Western Con-

tinent, with its infant cities, its huge uncleared forests, and its unamalgamated races.

I daresay you have guessed that the article on Ireland is Harriet Martineau's. Herbert Spencer did *not* contribute to the last number.

Apropos of articles, do you see the "Prospective Review"? There is an admirable critique of Kingsley's "Phaethon" in it, by James Martineau. But perhaps you may not be as much in love with Kingsley's genius, and as much "riled" by his faults, as I am.

Of course you have read "Ruth" by this time. Its style was a great refreshment to me, from its finish and fulness. How women have the courage to write and publishers the spirit to buy at a high price the false and feeble representations of life and character that most feminine novels give, is a constant marvel to me. "Ruth," with all its merits, will not be an enduring or classical fiction, — will it? Mrs. Gaskell seems to me to be constantly misled by a love of sharp contrasts, — of "dramatic" effects. She is not contented with the subdued colouring, — the half tints of real life. Hence she agitates one for the moment, but she does not secure one's lasting sympathy; her scenes and characters do not become typical. But how pretty and graphic are the touches of description! That little attic in the minister's house, for example, which, with its pure white dimity bed-curtains, its bright-green walls, and the rich brown of its stained floor, remind one of a snowdrop springing out of the soil. Then the rich humour of Sally, and the sly satire in the description of Mr. Bradshaw. Mrs. Gaskell has certainly a charming mind, and one cannot help loving her as one reads her books.

A notable book just come out is Wharton's "Summary of the Laws relating to Women." "Enfranchisement of women" only makes creeping progress; and that is best, for woman does not yet deserve a much better lot than man gives her.

I am writing to you the last thing, and am so tired that I am not quite sure whether I finish my sentences. But your divining power will supply their deficiencies.

The first half of February was spent in visits to the Brays and to Mrs. Clarke at Attleboro, and on returning to London Miss Evans writes: —

Letter to Mrs. Bray, 15th Feb. 1853.

I am only just returned to a sense of the real world about me, for I have been reading "Villette," a still more wonderful book than "Jane Eyre." There is something almost preternatural in its power.

Mrs. Follen showed me a delightful letter which she has had from Mrs. Stowe, telling all about herself. She begins by saying: "I am a little bit of a woman, rather more than forty, as withered and dry as a pinch of snuff; never very well worth looking at in my best days, and now a decidedly used-up article." The whole letter is most fascinating, and makes one love her.

Letter to the Brays, 19th Feb. 1853.

"Villette," "Villette," — have you read it?

We had an agreeable evening on Wednesday, — a Mr. Huxley being the centre of interest. Since then I have been headachy and in a perpetual rage over an article that gives me no end of trouble, and will not be satisfactory after all. I should like to stick red-hot skewers through the writer, whose style is as sprawling as his handwriting! For the rest, I am

Letter to the Brays, 25th Feb. 1853.

in excellent spirits, though not in the best health or temper. I am in for loads of work next quarter, but I shall not tell you what I am going to do.

I have been ready to tear my hair with disappointment about the next number of the "Review." In short, I am a miserable editor. I think I shall never have the energy to move, — it seems to be of so little consequence where I am or what I do.

Letter to the Brays, 19th March, 1853.

On Saturday I was correcting proofs literally from morning till night; yesterday ditto. The "Review" will be better than I once feared, but not so good as I once hoped. I suppose the weather has chilled your charity as well as mine. I am very hard and Mephistophelian just now, but I lay it all to this second winter. We had a pleasant evening last Wednesday. Lewes, as always, genial and amusing. He has quite won my liking, in spite of myself. Of course Mr. Bray highly approves the recommendation of the Commissioners on *Divorce*. I have been to Blandford Square (Leigh Smith's) to an evening party this week. Dined at Mr. Parkes's on Sunday, and am invited to go there again to-night to meet the Smiths. Lewes was describing Currer Bell to me yesterday as a little, plain, provincial, sickly-looking old maid. Yet what passion, what fire in her! Quite as much as in George Sand, only the clothing is less voluptuous.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 28th March, 1853.

What do you think of my going to Australia with Chrissey and all her family? — to settle them, and then come back. I am just going to write to her and suggest the idea. One wants *something* to keep up one's faith in happiness, — a ray or two for one's friends, if not for one's self.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 11th April, 1853.

We had an agreeable *soirée* last Wednesday. I fell in love with Helen Faucit. She is the most poetic woman I have seen for a long time, — there is the ineffable charm of a fine character which makes itself felt in her face, voice, and manner. I am taking doses of agreeable follies, as you recommend. Last night I went to the French theatre, and to-night I am going to the opera to hear "William Tell." People are very good to me. Mr. Lewes especially is kind and attentive, and has quite won my regard, after having had a good deal of my vituperation. Like a few other people in the world, he is much better than he seems. A man of heart and conscience wearing a mask of flippancy. When the warm days come, and the bearskin is under the acacia, you must have me again.

Letter to Mrs. Bray, 16th April, 1853.

6th May. — Went to Rosehill and returned on 23d to Strand.

On Wednesday I dined at Sir James Clark's, where the Combes are staying, and had a very pleasant evening. The Combes have taken lodgings in Oxford Terrace, where I mean to go. It is better than the Strand, — trees waving before the windows, and no noise of omnibuses. Last Saturday evening I had quite a new pleasure. We went to see Rachel again, and sat on the stage between the scenes. When the curtain fell, we walked about and saw the green-room, and all the dingy, dusty paraphernalia that make up theatrical splendour. I have not yet seen the "Vashti" of Currer Bell in Rachel, though there was some approach to it in Adrienne Lecouvreur.

Letter to Mrs. Bray, 17th June, 1853.

On Saturday we will go to Ockley, near Dorking, where are staying Miss Julia Smith, Barbara Smith, and Bessie Parkes. I shall write to the Ockley party to-day, and tell them of the probability that they will see you.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 28th June, 1853.

I never felt the delight of the thorough change that the coast gives one so much as now, and I shall be longing to be off with you again in October. I am on a delightful hill looking over the heads of the houses, and having a vast expanse of sea and sky for my only view. The bright weather and genial air — so different from what I have had for a year before — make me feel as happy and stupid as a well-conditioned cow. I sit looking at the sea and the sleepy ships with a purely animal *bien être*.

Letter to Mrs. Bray, 3d Aug. 1853, from St. Leonards.

It would have been a satisfaction to your benevolence to see me sitting on the beach laughing at the "Herald's" [1] many jokes, and sympathising with your indignation against Judge Maule. It always helps me to be happy when I know that you are so; but I do not choose to vindicate myself against doubts of that, because it is unworthy of you to entertain them. I am going on as well as possible physically, — really getting stout. I should like to have a good laugh with you immensely. How nice it would be to meet you and Cara on the beach this evening, and instead of sending you such a miserable interpreter of one's feelings as a letter, give you the look and the hand of warm affection! This British Channel really looks as blue as the Mediterranean to-day. What weather!

Letter to Mr. Bray, 9th Aug. 1853.

For the first time in my experience I am positively revelling in the "Prospective." James Mar-

[1] Mr. Bray had become proprietor of the "Coventry Herald."

tineau transcends himself in beauty of imagery in the article on Sir William Hamilton, but I have not finished him yet. Yesterday it rained *sans* intermission, and of course I said *cui bono?* and found my troubles almost more than I could bear; but to-day the sun shines, and there is blue above and blue below, consequently I find life very glorious, and myself a particularly fortunate *diavolessa.* The landlord of my lodgings is a German, — comes from Saxe-Weimar, knows well the Duchess of Orleans, and talked to me this morning of *Mr.* Schiller and *Mr.* Goethe. *Apropos* of Goethe, there is a most true, discriminating passage about him in the article on Shakspeare in the "Prospective." *Mr.* Goethe is one of my companions here, and I had felt some days before reading the passage the truth which it expresses.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 18th Aug. 1853.

Subjoined is the passage from the "Prospective Review" of August, 1853: —

"Goethe's works are too much in the nature of literary studies; the mind is often deeply impressed by them, but one doubts if the author was. He saw them as he saw the houses of Weimar and the plants in the act of metamorphosis. He had a clear perception of their fixed condition and their successive transitions, but he did not really (at least so it seems to us) comprehend their motive power. In a word, he appreciated their life but not their liveliness. . . . And we trace this not to a defect in imaginative power, — a defect which it would be a simple absurdity to impute to Goethe, — but to the tone of his character and the habits of his mind. He moved hither and thither through life, but he was always a man apart. He mixed with unnumbered kinds of men, with courts and academies, students and women, camps and artists, — but everywhere he was with them, yet not of them. In every scene he was there, and he made it clear that he was there

with a reserve and as a stranger. He went there to experience. *As a man of universal culture, and well skilled in the order and classification of human life, the fact of any one class or order being beyond his reach or comprehension seemed an absurdity; and it was an absurdity. He thought that he was equal to moving in any description of society, and he was equal to it; but then, on that account, he was absorbed in none.*"

As for me, I am in the best health and spirits. I have had a letter from Mr. Combe to-day urging me to go to Edinburgh, but I have made an engagement with Mr. Chapman to do work, which will oblige me to remain in London. Mrs. P. is a very bonny, pleasant-looking woman, with a smart drawing-room and liberal opinions, — in short, such a friend as self-interest, well understood, would induce one to cultivate. I find it difficult to meet with any lodgings at once tolerable and cheap. My theory is to *live* entirely — that is, pay rent and find food — out of my positive income, and then work for as large a surplus as I can get. The next number of the "Review" will be better than usual. Froude writes on the Book of Job! He at first talked of an article on the three great *subjective* poems, — Job, Faust, and Hamlet, — an admirable subject, — but it has shrunk to the Book of Job alone.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 19th Sept. 1853.

I have been busied about my lodgings all afternoon. I am not going to Albion Street, but to 21 Cambridge Street, Hyde Park Square. I hope you will be pleased with our present number. If you don't think the "Universal Postulate" first-rate, I shall renounce you as a critic. Why don't you write grumbling letters to me when you are out of humour with life, instead of making me ashamed of myself for ever

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, Ist Oct. 1853.

having grumbled to you? I have been a more good-for-nothing correspondent than usual lately, — this affair of getting lodgings, added to my other matters, has taken up my time and thoughts. I have promised to do some work to-night and to-morrow for a person [1] who is rather more idle than myself, so I have not a moment to spare.

I am reading "The Religion of the Heart" (Leigh Hunt's), and am far more pleased with it than I expected to be. I have just fallen on two passages with which you will agree. "Parker . . . is full of the poetry of religion; Martineau equally so, with a closer style and incessant eloquence of expression, perhaps a perilous superabundance of it as regards the claims of matter over manner; and his assumptions of perfection in the character of Jesus are so reiterated and peremptory that in a man of less evident heart and goodness they might almost look like a very unction of insincerity or of policy, — of doubt forcing itself to seem undoubting. Hennell's 'Christian Theism' is one long beautiful discourse proclaiming the great Bible of Creation, and reconciling Pagan and Christian Philosophy."

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 22d Oct. 1853.

Good Sir James Clark stopped me in the Park yesterday, as I was sauntering along with eyes on the clouds, and made very fatherly inquiries about me, urging me to spend a quiet evening with him and Lady Clark next week, — which I will certainly do; for they are two capital people, without any snobbery. I like my lodgings, — the housekeeper cooks charming little dinners for me, and I have not one disagreeable to complain of at present, save such as are inseparable from a ground floor.

[1] Correcting "Leader" proofs for Mr. Lewes.

Last night I saw the first fine specimen of a man in the shape of a clergyman that I ever met with, — Dawes, the Dean of Hereford. He is the man who has been making the experiment of mingling the middle and lower classes in schools. He has a face so intelligent and benignant that children might grow good by looking at it. Harriet Martineau called yesterday. She is going to her brother's at Birmingham soon.

Letter to Mr. Bray, 29th Oct. 1853.

Mr. Lewes was at Cambridge about a fortnight ago, and found that Herbert Spencer was a great deal talked of there for the article on the Universal Postulate, as well as other things. Mr. Lewes himself has a knot of devotees there who make his "History of Philosophy" a private text-book. Miss Martineau's "Comte" is out now. Do you mean to *do* it? or Mr. Lewes's? We can get no one to write an article on Comte for the next number of the "Westminster," — Bain, our last hope, refusing.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 3d Nov. 1853.

I think you would find some capital extracts for the "Herald" (Coventry), in the article on Church Parties in the "Edinburgh." The "Record" is attempting a reply to it, in which it talks of the truculent infidelity of *Voltaire* AND *Robespierre!* Has A. sent you his book on the Sabbath? If ever I write a book, I will make a present of it to nobody, — it is the surest way of taking off the edge of appetite for it, if no more. I am as well as possible, — and certainly when I put my head into the house in the Strand, I feel that I have gained, or rather escaped, a great deal physically by my change. Have you known the misery of writing with a

Letter to Mr. Bray, 5th Nov. 1853.

tired steel pen, which is reluctant to make a mark? If so, you will know why I leave off.

Letter to Mrs. Houghton, 7th Nov. 1853.

Chrissey has just sent me a letter, which tells that you have been suffering severely, and that you are yet very ill. I must satisfy my own feelings, by telling you that I grieve at this, though it will do you little good to know it. Still, when *I* am suffering, I do care for sympathy, and perhaps you are of the same mind. If so, think of me as your loving sister, who remembers all your kindness to her, all the pleasant hours she has had with you, and every little particular of her intercourse with you, however long and far she may have been removed from you. Dear Fanny, I can never be indifferent to your happiness or sorrow, and in this present sad affliction my thoughts and love are with you. I shall teaze you with no words about myself *now*, — perhaps by-and-by it will amuse you to have a longer letter.

Letter to Mr. Bray, 8th Nov. 1853.

Hitherto I have been spending £9 per month, — at least after that rate, — but I have had frequent guests. I am exceedingly comfortable, and feel quite at home now. Harriet Martineau has been very kind, — called again on Tuesday, and yesterday sent to invite me to go to Lady Compton's, where she is staying, on Saturday evening. This, too, in spite of my having vexed her by introducing Mr. Lewes to her, which I did as a desirable bit of peacemaking.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 22d Nov. 1853 (thirty-fourth birthday).

I begin this year more happily than I have done most years of my life. "Notre vraie destinée," says Comte, "se compose de *resignation* et *d'activité*," — and I seem more disposed to both than I have ever been

before. Let us hope that we shall both get stronger by the year's activity, — calmer by its resignation. I know it may be just the contrary, — don't suspect me of being a canting optimist. We *may* both find ourselves at the end of the year going faster to the hell of conscious moral and intellectual weakness. Still there is a possibility — even a probability — the other way. I have not seen Harriet Martineau's "Comte" yet, — she is going to give me a copy, — but Mr. Lewes tells me it seems to him admirably well done. I told Mr. Chapman yesterday that I wished to give up any connection with the editorship of the "Westminster." He wishes me to continue the present state of things until April. I shall be much more satisfied on many accounts to have done with that affair; but I shall find the question of supplies rather a difficult one this year, as I am not likely to get any money either for "Feuerbach" or for "The Idea of a Future Life,"[1] for which I am to have "half profits" $= \frac{0}{0}$!

I hope you will appreciate this *bon mot* as I do: "C'est un homme admirable, — il se tait en sept langues!"[2]

I am going to detail all my troubles to you. In the first place, the door of my sitting-room does n't quite fit, and a draught is the consequence. Secondly, there is a piano in the house which has decidedly entered on its second childhood, and this piano is occasionally played on by Miss P. with a really enviable *aplomb*. Thirdly, the knocks at the door startle

Letter to Mrs. Bray, 2d Dec. 1853.

[1] Advertised in 1853–54 as to appear by "Marian Evans" in Chapman's Quarterly Series, but never published.

[2] Lord Acton tells me he first heard this *bon mot*, in 1855, related of Immanuel Bekker, the philologist.

me, — an annoyance inseparable from a ground-floor room. Fourthly, Mrs. P. scolds the servants *stringendo e fortissimo* while I am dressing in the morning. Fifthly, — there is no fifthly. I really have not another discomfort when I am well, which, alas! I have not been for the last ten days; so, while I have been up to the chin in possibilities of enjoyment, I have been too sick and headachy to use them. One thing is needful, — a good digestion.

Letter to Mrs. Bray, 28th Dec. 1853.

Spent Christmas Day alone at Cambridge Street. How shall I thank you enough for sending me that splendid barrel of beet-root, so nicely packed? I shall certainly eat it and enjoy it, which, I fancy, is the end you sought, and not thanks. Don't suppose that I am looking miserable, — *au contraire.* My only complaints just now are idleness and dislike-to-getting-up-in-the-morningness, whereby the day is made too short for what I want to do. I resolve every day to conquer the flesh the next, and, of course, am a little later in consequence. I dined with Arthur Helps yesterday at Sir James Clark's, — very snug, — only he and myself. He is a sleek man, with close-snipped hair; has a quiet, humorous way of talking, like his books.

At the beginning of January, 1854, there was another visit to Mrs. Clarke at Attleboro for ten days.

Letter to Chas. Bray, 6th Feb. 1854.

In the last number of the "Scotsman" which I sent you, there was a report of a speech by Dr. Guthrie at the Education meeting, containing a passage which I meant to have copied. He is speaking of the impossibility of teaching morality with the "Bible shut," and says that in that case the teacher would be

obliged to resort to "congruity and the fitness of things," about which the boy knows nothing more than that the apple is *fit* for his mouth. What is wanted to convince the boy of his sin is, "Thou God seest me," and "Thou bleeding Lamb, the best morality is love of Thee"!! Mr. Lewes came a few minutes after you left, and desired me to tell you that he was sorry to miss you.

Thank you for your very kind letter, which I received this morning. It is pleasant to think of you as quite well, and enjoying your sea breezes.

Letter to Mrs. Houghton, 6th April, 1854.

But do you imagine me sitting with my hands crossed, ready to start for any quarter of the world at the shortest notice? It is not on those terms that people, not rich, live in London. I shall be deep in proof-sheets till the end of May, and shall only dismiss them to make material for new ones. I daresay you will pity me. But as one of Balzac's characters says, after maturity, "La vie n'est que l'exercice d'une habitude dans un milieu préféré;" and I could no more live out of my *milieu* than the haddocks I daresay you are often having for dinner.

My health is better. I had got into a labyrinth of headaches and palpitations, but I think I am out of it now, and I hope to keep well. I am not the less obliged to you, dear Fanny, for wishing to have me with you. But to leave London now would not be agreeable to me, even if it were morally possible. To see you again would certainly be a pleasure, but I hope that will come to pass without my crossing the Irish Channel.

I am rather overdone with the week's work, and the prospect of what is to come next. Poor Lewes is ill, and is ordered not to put pen to paper for

a month; so I have something to do for him in addition to my own work, which is rather pressing. He is gone to Arthur Helps, in Hampshire, for ten days, and I really hope this total cessation from work, in obedience to a peremptory order, will end in making him better than he has been for the last year. No opera and no fun for me for the next month! Happily I shall have no time to regret it. Plenty of bright sun on your anemone bed. How lovely your place must look with its fresh leaves!

Letter to Mrs. Bray, Saturday, 18th April, 1854.

It is quite possible that I may wish to go to the Continent, or twenty other things. Mr. Lewes is going on a walking excursion to Windsor to-day with his doctor, who pronounces him better, but not yet fit for work. However, he is obliged to do a little, and must content himself with an *approximation* to his doctor's directions. In this world all things are approximations, and in the system of the Dog Star too, in spite of Dr. Whewell.

Letter to Chas. Bray, 23d May, 1854.

My troubles are purely psychical, — self-dissatisfaction, and despair of achieving anything worth the doing. I can truly say they vanish into nothing before any fear for the happiness of those I love. Thank you for letting me know how things are, for indeed I could not bear to be shut out from your anxieties. When I spoke of myself as an island, I did not mean that I was so exceptionally. We are all islands, —

Letter to Mrs. Bray, Friday, no date, 1854.

> "Each in his hidden sphere of joy or woe,
> Our hermit spirits dwell and roam apart," —

and this seclusion is sometimes the most intensely felt at the very moment your friend is caressing

you or consoling you. But this gradually becomes a source of satisfaction instead of repining. When we are young, we think our troubles a mighty business, — that the world is spread out expressly as a stage for the particular drama of our lives, and that we have a right to rant and foam at the mouth if we are crossed. I have done enough of that in my time. But we begin at last to understand that these things are important only to our own consciousness, which is but as a globule of dew on a rose-leaf, that at mid-day there will be no trace of. This is no high-flown sentimentality, but a simple reflection, which I find useful to me every day. I expect to see Mr. Lewes back again to-day. His poor head — his only fortune — is not well yet; and he has had the misery of being *ennuyé* with idleness, without perceiving the compensating physical improvement. Still, I hope the good he has been getting has been greater than he has been conscious of. I expect "Feuerbach" will be all in print by the end of next week, and there are no skippings, except such as have been made on very urgent grounds.

Thanks for your assurance of welcome. I will trust to it when the gods send favourable circumstances. But I see no probability of my being able to be with you before your other midsummer visitors arrive. I delight to think that you are all a little more cheery.

Letter to Mrs. Bray, Tuesday, 6th June, 1854.

I reached the Euston Station as dusty as an old ledger, but with no other "incommodity." I went to the Lyceum last night to see "Sunshine through the Clouds," [1]

Letter to Mrs. Bray, Wednesday, 28th June, 1854.

[1] Translated and adapted from the French, "La joie fait peur," by Mr. Lewes, under the name of Slingsby Lawrence.

a wonderfully original and beautiful piece by Mme. de Girardin, which makes one cry rather too much for pleasure. Vestris acts finely the bereaved mother, passing through all the gradations of doubt and hope to the actual recovery of her lost son. My idea of you is rather bright just now, and really helps to make me enjoy all that is enjoyable. That is part of the benefit I have had from my pleasant visit, which was made up of sunshine, green fields, pleasant looks, and good eatables, — an excellent compound. Will you be so kind as to send my books by railway, *without* the Shelley?

Letter to Mrs. Bray, Monday, 4th July, 1854.

Pray consider the Strauss MSS. waste paper. *I* shall never want them again. I dined with your old acquaintance, Dr. Conolly, at Sir James Clark's, the other day. He took me down to dinner, and we talked of you.

The translation of Ludwig Feuerbach's "Wesen des Christenthums" was published in July in Chapman's Quarterly Series, with Miss Evans's name on the title-page as the translator; the first and only time her real name appeared in print.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 10th July, 1854.

I am going to pack up the Hebrew Grammar, the Apocryphal Gospels, and your pretty Titian, to be sent to you. Shall I despatch them by rail or deposit them with Mr. Chapman to be asked for by Mr. Bray when he comes to town? I shall soon send you a good-bye, for I am preparing to go abroad (?). Herbert Spencer's article on the Genesis of Science is a good one. He will stand in the Biographical Dictionaries of 1954 as "Spencer, Herbert, an

original and profound philosophical writer, especially known by his great work, . . . which gave a new impulse to psychology, and has mainly contributed to the present advanced position of that science, compared with that which it had attained in the middle of the last century. The life of this philosopher, like that of the great Kant, offers little material for the narrator. Born in the year 1820," &c.

Dear friends, — all three, — I have only time to say good-bye, and God bless you. *Poste Restante,* Weimar, for the next six weeks, and afterwards Berlin. Ever your loving and grateful Marian.

Letter to the Brays, 20th July, 1854.

We have now been led up to the most important event in George Eliot's life, — her union with Mr. George Henry Lewes. Here, as elsewhere, it seems to me to be of the first importance that she should speak for herself; and there is, fortunately, a letter to Mrs. Bray, dated in September, 1855, — fourteen months after the event, — which puts on record the point of view from which she regarded her own action. I give this letter here (out of its place as to date); and I may add — what, I think, has not been mentioned before — that not only was Mr. Lewes's previous family life irretrievably spoiled, but his home had been wholly broken up for nearly two years. In forming a judgment on so momentous a question, it is above all things necessary to understand what was actually undertaken, — what was actually achieved, — and, in my opinion, this can best be arrived at, not from any outside statement or arguments, but by consideration of the whole tenor of the life which follows, in the development of which Mr. Lewes's true character, as well as George Eliot's, will unfold itself. No words that any one else can write, no arguments any one else can use, will, I think, be so impressive as the life itself.

Letter to Mrs. Bray, 4th Sept. 1855.

If there is any one action or relation of my life which is and always has been profoundly serious, it is my relation to Mr. Lewes. It is, however, natural enough that you should mistake me in many ways, for not only are you unacquainted with Mr. Lewes's real character and the course of his actions, but also it is several years now since you and I were much together, and it is possible that the modifications my mind has undergone may be quite in the opposite direction of what you imagine. No one can be better aware than yourself that it is possible for two people to hold different opinions on momentous subjects with equal sincerity, and an equally earnest conviction that their respective opinions are alone the truly moral ones. If we differ on the subject of the marriage laws, I at least can believe of you that you cleave to what you believe to be good; and I don't know of anything in the nature of your views that should prevent you from believing the same of me. *How far* we differ, I think we neither of us know, for I am ignorant of your precise views; and apparently you attribute to me both feelings and opinions which are not mine. We cannot set each other quite right in this matter in letters, but one thing I can tell you in few words. Light and easily broken ties are what I neither desire theoretically nor could live for practically. Women who are satisfied with such ties do *not* act as I have done. That any unworldly, unsuperstitious person who is sufficiently acquainted with the realities of life can pronounce my relation to Mr. Lewes immoral, I can only understand by remembering how subtle and complex are the influences that mould opinion. But I *do* remember this: and I indulge in no arro-

gant or uncharitable thoughts about those who condemn us, even though we might have expected a somewhat different verdict. From the majority of persons, of course, we never looked for anything but condemnation. We are leading no life of self-indulgence, except indeed that, being happy in each other, we find everything easy. We are working hard to provide for others better than we provide for ourselves, and to fulfil every responsibility that lies upon us. Levity and pride would not be a sufficient basis for that. Pardon me if, in vindicating myself from some unjust conclusions, I seem too cold and self-asserting. I should not care to vindicate myself if I did not love you and desire to relieve you of the pain which you say these conclusions have given you. Whatever I may have misinterpreted before, I do not misinterpret your letter this morning, but read in it nothing else than love and kindness towards me, to which my heart fully answers yes. I should like never to write about myself again; it is not healthy to dwell on one's own feelings and conduct, but only to try and live more faithfully and lovingly every fresh day. I think not one of the endless words and deeds of kindness and forbearance you have ever shown me has vanished from my memory. I recall them often, and feel, as about everything else in the past, how deficient I have been in almost every relation of my life. But that deficiency is irrevocable, and I can find no strength or comfort except in "pressing forward towards the things that are before," and trying to make the present better than the past. But if we should never be very near each other again, dear Cara, do bear this faith in your mind, that I was not insensible or ungrateful to all your goodness, and

that I am one amongst the many for whom you have not lived in vain. I am very busy just now, and have been obliged to write hastily. Bear this in mind, and believe that no meaning is mine which contradicts my assurance that I am your affectionate and earnest friend.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER V

MARCH, 1850, TO JULY, 1854

Return to England with M. D'Albert — Depressing effect of change — Visit to Rosehill — Visit to brother and sister at Griff and Meriden — Deeper depression — To Rosehill again with M. D'Albert — Makes her home there for sixteen months — Reviews Mackay's "Progress of the Intellect" in "Westminster" — Meets Mr. Chapman, the editor of the "Westminster" — Helps to settle Prospectus of new series of the "Review" — Visits Robert Noel at Bishop Steignton with Mrs. Bray — Visit to London — Crystal Palace — Returns to Rosehill, and meets Mr. and Mrs. George Combe — Goes to London as assistant editor of the "Westminster Review" — Letters to Brays — Review writing: Dr. Brabant, Foxton, Wilson — Meets Mr. Herbert Spencer — Miss Martineau — Distractions of London — Low health — Miss Bremer — Introduction to Mr. Lewes — Opinion of House of Lords — Carlyle's "Life of Sterling" — Carlyle anecdotes — Mackay — James Martineau — J. H. Newman's Lectures — Translation of Schleiermacher — Letter from Carlyle — Intimacy begins with Mr. Lewes — Reviews Carlyle's "Sterling" in "Westminster" — Visit to Rosehill — Returns to Strand — Harriet Martineau — Pierre Leroux — Louis Blanc — Miss Bessie Parkes — Mrs. Peter Taylor — "Margaret Fuller's Life" — Description of "Westminster" reviewers — Growing intimacy with Mr. Herbert Spencer — Meeting of authors and booksellers at Mr. Chapman's — Admiration of Prince Albert — Grisi — Hack work of "Review" — Appreciation of Miss Martineau's writings — Singing of Charity children at St. Paul's — George Combe's opinion of "Westminster" editing — Barbara Leigh Smith — Visit to Broadstairs — Florence Nightingale — Return to Strand — Depression — Professor Owen on the Cerebellum — Visit to Combes at Edinburgh, and to Harriet Martineau at Ambleside — Return to London — Reading "Esmond" — Lord Brougham's speech — Work in Strand — Bryant — Visit to Rosehill — Death of Edward Clarke — Visit to widowed sister at Meriden — Return to Strand — Letter to Mrs. Peter Taylor — Views on America — "Ruth" — Visit to Rosehill and to Mrs. Clarke at Attleboro — Return to Strand — Reading "Villette" — Letter from Mrs. Stowe to Mrs. Follen — Meets Huxley — Thinks of going to Australia to settle Mrs. Clarke — Admiration of Helen Faucit — Growing regard for Mr. Lewes — Kindness of Sir James Clark — Visit to Ockley — Change to St. Leonards — Improvement in health — Return to Strand — Spencer's "Universal Postulate" — Removal to 21 Cambridge Street — Leigh Hunt's "Religion of the Heart" — Dawes, Dean of Hereford — Harriet Martineau — Comte — Contemplates publishing "The Idea of a Future Life" — Meets Arthur Helps — Intimate relations with Mr. Lewes — Translation of Feuerbach — Visit to Rosehill — Return to London — Feuerbach completed — Estimate of Herbert Spencer — Good-bye to Brays — Union with Mr. Lewes — Letter to Mrs. Bray thereon.

CHAPTER VI

I SAID a last farewell to Cambridge Street on 20th July, 1854, and found myself on board the Ravensbourne, bound for Antwerp. The day was glorious, and our passage perfect. The sunset was lovely, but still lovelier the dawn as we were passing up the Scheldt between two and three in the morning. The crescent moon, the stars, the first faint blush of the dawn reflected in the glassy river, the dark mass of clouds on the horizon, which sent forth flashes of lightning, and the graceful forms of the boats and sailing-vessels, painted in jet-black on the reddish gold of the sky and water, made up an unforgettable picture. Then the sun rose and lighted up the sleepy shores of Belgium, with their fringe of long grass, their rows of poplars, their church-spires and farm-buildings.

Journal, 20th July, 1854.

The great treat at Antwerp was the sight of the Descent from the Cross, which, with its pendant, the Elevation of the Cross, has been undergoing restoration. In the latter, the face of Jesus is sublime in its expression of agony and trust in the Divine. It is certainly the finest conception of the suffering Christ I have ever seen. The rest of the picture gave me no pleasure. But in the Descent from the Cross, colour, form, and expression alike impressed me with the sense of grandeur and beauty. A little miserable copy of the picture placed near it served as an admirable foil.

21st July.

We went to the museum and saw Rubens's Crucifixion, even more beautiful to me than the Descent from the Cross. These two pictures profoundly impressed me with the miserable lack of breadth and grandeur in the conceptions of our living artists. The reverence for the old masters is not all humbug and superstition. Journal, 22d July.

We breakfasted in the public room at the hotel at Cologne, and were joined there by Dr. Brabant and Strauss. After a short interview with them, we went on board the steamboat which was to take us to Coblentz. 30th July.

It was very pretty to look out of the window, when dressing, on a garden that reminded one of an English village: the town is more like a huge village, or market-town, than the precincts of a court. Weimar, Description, Aug.-Oct. 1854.

G. called on Schöll, and in the afternoon he (Schöll) came and took us to the *Schloss*, where we saw the Dichter Zimmer, — a suite of rooms dedicated to Goethe, Schiller, and Wieland. In each room there is the bust of the poet who is its presiding genius; and the walls of the Goethe and Schiller rooms are decorated with frescos, representing scenes from their works. The Wieland room is decorated with arabesques only. The idea of these rooms is a very pretty one, but the frescos are badly executed. I am delighted with Schöll. He is a bright-looking, well-made German, with his head finely set on his shoulders, very little like a German. We discovered, after we had known him some time, that he is an Austrian, and so has more southern blood in his veins than the heavy Thuringians. His manners are hearty and cordial, and his conversation really instructive: his ideas are so thoroughly shaped and so admirably ex-

pressed. Sauppe is also a *Gelehrter*, Director of the Gymnasium, and editor of a series of Classics which are being brought out; and he is evidently thought a great deal of in Weimar. We went with the Schölls and Sauppes to Tiefurt, and saw the queer little *Schloss* which used to be Amalia's residence. Tiefurt was a favourite resort of ours, for the walk to it is a very pleasant one, and the Tiefurt park is a little paradise. The Ilm is seen here to the best advantage: it is clearer than at Weimar, and winds about gracefully among fine trees. One of the banks is a high steep declivity, which shows the trees in all their perfection. In autumn, when the yellow and scarlet were at their brightest, these banks were fairy-like in their beauty. It was here that Goethe and his Court friends got up the performance of "Die Fischerin" by torchlight.

About ten days after our arrival at Weimar, we made an excursion to Ettersburg, one of the Duke's summer residences, interesting to us beforehand as the scene of private theatricals and *sprees* in the Goethe days. We carried provisions with us and Keats's poems. The morning was one of the brightest and hottest that August ever bestowed, and it required some resolution to trudge along the shadeless *chaussée*, which formed the first two or three miles of our way. One compensating pleasure was the sight of the beautiful mountain ashes in full berry which, alternately with cherry-trees, border the road for a considerable distance. I felt a child's love for the bunches of coral standing out against the blue sky. The *Schloss* is a house of very moderate size, and no pretension of any kind. Two flights of steps lead up to the door, and the balustrades are ornamented with

beautiful creepers. A tiny sort of piazza under the steps is ornamented with creepers too, and has pretty earthenware vases filled with plants hanging from the ceiling. We felt how much beauty might be procured at small expense in looking at these things. A beautiful walk through a beech-wood took us to the *Mooshütte*, before which stands the beech whereon Goethe and his friends cut their names, and from which Goethe denounced Waldemar. We could recognise some of the initials. With Ettersburg I shall always associate Arthur Helps, for he was with us on the second and last time we saw it. He came to Weimar quite unexpectedly on the 29th August, and the next evening we all three drove to Ettersburg. He said the country just round Weimar reminded him of Spain. This led him to talk of his Spanish travels, and he told us some delightful stories in a delightful way. At one inn he was considerably embarrassed in eating his dinner by the presence of a handsome woman, who sat directly opposite to him, resting on her elbows, and fixing her dark eyes on him with a fearful intensity of interest. This woman was the cook, anxious to know that her dishes were acceptable to the stranger. Under this terrible surveillance, he did not dare to omit a single dish, though sorely longing to do so.

Our greatest expedition from Weimar was to Ilmenau. We set out with a determination to find the Gabel-Bach and Kickel-hahn (Goethe's residence) without the incumbrance of a guide. We found the man who inhabits the simple wooden house, which used to be Carl August's hunting-box. He sent a man on with us to show us the way to the Kickel-hahn, which we at last reached, — I with weary legs. There is a magnificent view of

hills from this spot; but Goethe's tiny wooden house is now closely shut in by fir-trees, and nothing can be seen from the windows. His room, which forms the upper floor of the house, is about ten or twelve feet square. It is now quite empty, but there is an interesting memorial of his presence in these wonderful lines, written by his own hand, near the window-frame, —

"Ueber allen Gipfeln
Ist Ruh,
In allen Wipfeln
Spürest du
Kaum einen Hauch;
Die Vögelein schweigen im Walde.
Warte nur, balde
Ruhest du auch."

We wrote our names near one of the windows.

About the middle of September the theatre opened, and we went to hear "Ernani." Liszt looked splendid as he conducted the opera. The grand outline of his face and floating hair were seen to advantage as they were thrown into dark relief by the stage lamps. We were so fortunate as to have all three of Wagner's most celebrated operas while we were at Weimar. G., however, had not patience to sit out more than two acts of "Lohengrin;" and, indeed, I too was weary. The declamation appeared to me monotonous, and situations, in themselves trivial or disagreeable, were dwelt on fatiguingly. Without feeling competent to pass a judgment on this opera as music, one may venture to say that it fails in one grand requisite of art, based on an unchangeable element in human nature, — the need for contrast. With the "Fliegender Holländer" I was delighted; the poem and the music were alike charming. The "Tannhäuser," too, created in me a great desire

to hear it again. Many of the situations, and much of the music, struck me as remarkably fine. And I appreciated these operas all the better retrospectively when we saw "Der Freischütz," which I had never before heard and seen on the stage. The effect of the delicious music, with which one is so familiar, was completely spoiled by the absence of recitative and the terrible *lapsus* from melody to ordinary speech. The bacchanalian song seemed simply ridiculous, sung at a little pot-house table at a party of *two*, one of whom was sunk in melancholy; and the absurdity reached a *ne plus ultra*, when Caspar climbed the tree, apparently with the sole purpose of being shot. *Apropos* of the theatre, we were immensely amused to learn that a fair, small-featured man, who somehow always looked to me as if he had just come out of the shell, had come to Weimar to fit himself for a dramatic writer by going behind the scenes! He had as yet written nothing, but was going to work in what he considered a *grïndlich* way.

When we passed along the Schiller Strasse, I used to be very much thrilled by the inscription, "Hier wohnte Schiller," over the door of his small house. Very interesting it is to see his study, which is happily left in its original state. In his bedroom we saw his skull for the first time, and were amazed at the smallness of the intellectual region. There is an intensely interesting sketch of Schiller lying dead, which I saw for the first time in the study; but all pleasure in thinking of Schiller's portraits and bust is now destroyed to me by the conviction of their untruthfulness. Rauch told us that he had a *miserable Stirne*.[1] Waagen says that Tieck the sculptor told him

[1] A wretched forehead.

there was something in Schiller's whole person which reminded him of a *camel.*

Goethe's house is much more important-looking, but, to English eyes, far from being the palatial residence which some German writers think it. The entrance-hall is certainly rather imposing, with its statues in niches and broad staircase. The latter was made after his own design, and was an "aftershine" of Italian tastes. The pictures are wretched, the casts not much better, — indeed, I remember nothing which seemed intrinsically worth looking at. The MS. of his "Römische Elegien" written by himself, in the Italian character, is to be seen here; and one likes to look at it better than at most of the other things. G. had obtained permission from Frau v. Goethe to see the studio and Schlafzimmer, which are not open to the public, and here our feelings were deeply moved. We entered first a small room containing drawers and shelves devoted to his mineralogical collections. From these we passed into the study. It is rather a dark room, for there are only two small windows, — German windows. A plain deal table stands in the middle, and near the chair, against this table, is a high basket where, I was afterwards told, Goethe used to put his pocket-handkerchief. A long sort of writing-table and bookcase united stands against one wall. Here hangs the pincushion, just as he left it, with visiting-cards suspended on threads, and other trifles which greatness and death have made sacred. Against the opposite wall, where you enter the bedroom, there is a high writing-desk, on which stands a little statue of Napoleon in creamy glass. The bedroom is very small. By the side of the bed stands a stuffed arm-chair, where he used to sit and read

while he drank his coffee in the morning. It was not until very late in his life that he adopted the luxury of an arm-chair. From the other side of the study one enters the library, which is fitted up in a very makeshift fashion, with rough deal shelves, and bits of paper, with Philosophy, History, &c., written on them to mark the classification of the books. Among such memorials one breathes deeply, and the tears rush to one's eyes. There is one likeness of Goethe that is really startling and thrilling from the idea it gives one of perfect resemblance. It is painted on a cup, and is a tiny miniature, but the execution is so perfect that, on applying a magnifying-glass, every minute stroke has as natural an appearance as the texture of a flower or the parts of an insect under the microscope.

Equally interesting is the *Gartenhaus*, which we used to see almost every day in our walks. Within, it is a not uncomfortable homely sort of cottage; no furniture is left in it, and the family want to sell it. It stands on a pleasant slope fronting the west, and there is a charming bit of garden and orchard attached to it. Close to the garden hedge runs the road which leads to Ober Weimar, and on the other side of this road a meadow stretches to the trees which border the Ilm. A bridge nearly opposite the Gartenhaus takes one to the Borkenhaus, Carl August's little retreat, from which he used to telegraph to Goethe. The road to Ober Weimar was one of our favourite walks, especially towards the end of our stay at Weimar, when we were glad of all the sunshine we could get. Sometimes we used to turn out of it, up a grove of weeping birches, into the ploughed fields at the top of the slope on which

the Gartenhaus and other little villas stand. Here we enjoyed many a lovely sunset: one in particular was marvellously splendid. The whole hemisphere was golden, towards the east tinted with rose colour. From this little height we looked on the plantations of the park in their autumnal colouring, the town, with its steep-roofed church and its castle tower, coloured a gay green, the line of chestnuts along the Belvedere Chaussée, and Belvedere itself peeping from its nest of trees.

Another very favourite walk of mine was the *Webicht*, a beautiful wood through which ran excellent carriage-roads and grassy footpaths. How richly have I enjoyed skirting this wood, and seeing, on the other side, the sky arching grandly down over the open fields, the evening red flushing the west over the town, and the bright stars come out as if to relieve the sun in his watch over mortals! And then the winding road through the Webicht on the side towards Tiefurt, with its tall overarching trees now bending their mossy trunks forward, now standing with stately erectness like lofty pillars; and the charming grassy paths through the heart of the wood among its silvery-barked birches! The Webicht lies towards Tiefurt, and one side of it is bordered by the road thither. I remember, as we were returning from Tiefurt one evening, a beautiful effect of the setting sunlight pouring itself under the trees and making the road before us almost crimson.

One of our pleasantest acquaintances at Weimar was the French Ambassador, the Marquis de Ferrière, a very favourable specimen of a Frenchman, but intensely French. His genial soul and perfect good-humour gave one the same sort of *bien être* as a well-stuffed arm-chair and a warm hearth-rug.

In the course of conversation, speaking of Yvan's accounts of his travels (the Marquis was first Secretary to the Chinese Embassy which Yvan accompanied), he said, " C'était faux d'un bout à l'autre; mais c'était spirituel, paradoxal, amusant, — enfin *tout ce qu'il fallait pour un journal.*" Another day he observed that the famous words of Napoleon to his Egyptian army, " Forty centuries look down on you from the summits of these pyramids," were characteristic of the French national feeling, as those of Nelson, " England expects the man to make his duty," were of the English. This is a fair specimen of the correctness with which one generally hears English quoted; and we often reminded ourselves that it was a mirror in which we might see our own German.

Liszt's conversation is charming. I never met with a person whose manner of telling a story was so piquant. The last evening but one that he called on us, wishing to express his pleasure in G.'s article about him, he very ingeniously conveyed that expression in a story about Spontini and Berlioz. Spontini visited Paris while Liszt was living there, and haunted the opera, — a stiff, self-important personage, with high shirt-collars, the least attractive individual imaginable: Liszt turned up his own collars, and swelled out his person, so as to give us a vivid idea of the man. Every one would have been glad to get out of Spontini's way, — indeed elsewhere " on feignait de le croire mort," but at Paris, as he was a member of the Institute, it was necessary to recognise his existence. Liszt met him at Erard's more than once. On one of these occasions Liszt observed to him that Berlioz was a great admirer of his (Spontini's), whereupon Spontini burst into a ter-

rible invective against Berlioz as a man who, with the like of him, was ruining art, &c. Shortly after the "Vestale' was performed, and forthwith appeared an enthusiastic article by Berlioz on Spontini's music. The next time Liszt met him of the high collars, he said, "You see I was not wrong in what I said about Berlioz's admiration of you." Spontini swelled in his collars, and replied, "Monsieur, Berlioz a du talent comme critique!"

Liszt's replies were always felicitous and characteristic. Talking of Mme. d'Agoult, he told us that when her novel, "Nelida," appeared, in which Liszt himself is pilloried as a delinquent, he asked her, "Mais pourquoi avez-vous tellement maltraité ce pauvre Lehmann?" The first time we were asked to breakfast at his house, the Altenburg, we were shown into the garden, where, in a saloon formed by overarching trees, the *déjeuner* was set out. We found Hoffmann von Fallersleben, the lyric poet, Dr. Schade, — a *Gelehrter*, and Cornelius. Presently came a Herr — or Doctor — Raff, a musician, who has recently published a volume called "Wagnerfrage." Soon after we were joined by Liszt and the Princess Marie, an elegant, gentle-looking girl of seventeen, and last by the Princess Wittgenstein, with her nephew, Prince Eugène, and a young French artist, a pupil of Scheffer. The Princess was tastefully dressed in a morning robe of some semi-transparent white material, lined with orange colour, which formed the bordering and ornamented the sleeves, a black lace jacket, and a piquant cap set on the summit of her comb, and trimmed with violet colour. When the cigars came, Hoffmann was requested to read some of his poetry, and he gave us a bacchanalian poem with great spirit. I sat next to

Liszt, and my great delight was to watch him and observe the sweetness of his expression. Genius, benevolence, and tenderness beam from his whole countenance, and his manners are in perfect harmony with it. Then came the thing I had longed for, — his playing. I sat near him, so that I could see both his hands and face. For the first time in my life I beheld real inspiration, — for the first time I heard the true tones of the piano. He played one of his own compositions, — one of a series of religious fantasies. There was nothing strange or excessive about his manner. His manipulation of the instrument was quiet and easy, and his face was simply grand, — the lips compressed and the head thrown a little backward. When the music expressed quiet rapture or devotion, a sweet smile flitted over his features; when it was triumphant, the nostrils dilated. There was nothing petty or egoistic to mar the picture. Why did not Scheffer paint him thus, instead of representing him as one of the three Magi? But it just occurs to me that Scheffer's idea was a sublime one. There are the two aged men who have spent their lives in trying to unravel the destinies of the world, and who are looking for the Deliverer, — for the light from on high. Their young fellow-seeker, having the fresh inspiration of early life, is the first to discern the herald star, and his ecstasy reveals it to his companions. In this young Magus, Scheffer has given a portrait of Liszt; but even here, where he might be expected to idealise unrestrainedly, he falls short of the original. It is curious that Liszt's face is the type that one sees in all Scheffer's pictures, — at least, in all I have seen.

In a little room which terminates the suite at

the Altenburg, there is a portrait of Liszt, also by Scheffer, — the same of which the engraving is familiar to every one. This little room is filled with memorials of Liszt's triumphs and the worship his divine talent has won. It was arranged for him by the Princess, in conjunction with the Arnims, in honour of his birthday. There is a medallion of him by Schwanthaler, a bust by an Italian artist, also a medallion by Rietschl, — very fine, — and cabinets full of jewels and precious things, — the gifts of the great. In the music *salon* stand Beethoven's and Mozart's pianos. Beethoven's was a present from Broadwood, and has a Latin inscription intimating that it was presented as a tribute to his illustrious genius. One evening Liszt came to dine with us at the Erb Prinz, and introduced M. Rubinstein, a young Russian, who is about to have an opera of his performed in Weimar. Our expenses at Weimar, including wine and washing, were £2 6*s.* per week. Dear Weimar! We were sorry to say good-bye to it, with its pleasant group of friends. On the 4th of November, after a stay of just three months, we turned our backs on it "to seek fresh streets and faces new" at Berlin.

Berlin, Recollections, Nov. 1854, to March, 1855.

There are certain persons without any physiognomy, the catalogue of whose features, as item a Roman nose, item a pair of black eyes, &c., gives you the entire contents of their faces. There is no difference of opinion about the looks of such people. All the world is agreed either that they are pretty or ugly. So it is with Berlin. Every one tells you it is an uninteresting modern city, with broad, monotonous streets; and when you see it, you cannot for the life of you get up an emotion of surprise, or make

a remark about the place which you have not heard before.

The day after our arrival was Sunday, 6th November: the sun shone brightly, and we went to walk in the Linden, elbowing our way among the *promeneurs endimanchés*, who looked remarkably smart and handsome after the Thuringians. We had not gone far when we met a nice-looking old gentleman, with an order round his neck, and a gold-headed cane in his hand, who exclaimed, on seeing G., "Ist 's möglich?" and then bade him heartily welcome. I saw at once it was the Varnhagen of whom I had heard so often. His niece, arrayed in smiles and a pink bonnet, was with him.

For the first six weeks, when the weather permitted, we took long walks in the Thiergarten, where the straight and uniform avenues of insignificant trees contrasted very disadvantageously with the charming variety of our beloved park at Weimar. Still we now and then noticed a beautiful wintry effect, especially in the part most remote from the town, where the trees are finer and the arrangements more varied. One walk, which skirted the Thiergarten on the right-hand side coming from the town, we were particularly fond of, because it gave us on one side an open view, with water and a boat or two, which, touched by the magic of sunshine, was pleasant to see. At Berlin it was "a day of small things" with regard to the beautiful, and we made much of little.

Our little circle of acquaintances was very agreeable and varied. Varnhagen was a real treasure to G., for his library supplied all the deficiencies of the public one, where to ask for books was generally like "sinking buckets into empty wells."

He is a man of real culture, kindliness, and polish (Germanly speaking); and he has besides that thorough liberalism, social, religious, and political, which sets the mind at ease in conversation, and delivers it from the fear of running against some prejudice, or coming suddenly on the sunk fence of some miserable limitation. The first morning he called on us he talked of his terrible disappointment in Carlyle, a subject to which he often returned. He evidently felt an antipathy to the "Teufelsdröckh," which indeed it was not difficult to understand from the mere *manière d'être* of the two men. They had corresponded for years before they saw each other; and Varnhagen was, and is, a great admirer of Carlyle's best work, but he was thoroughly repelled by his rough paradoxical talk, and, more justifiably, by the despotic doctrines which it has been his humour to teach of late. We were amused to hear that Carlyle said he should think no one could die at Berlin, "for in beds *without curtains* what Christian could give up the ghost?"

At Varnhagen's we met for the first time Professor Stahr, who was there with Fanny Lewald, Fräulein Solmar, Frau Muisch, Dr. Ring, Dr. Vehse, Gräfin von Kalkreuth, and Director Wilhelm Schadow, author of "Der Moderne Vasari." We talked of Goethe. Varnhagen brought out autographs and portraits, and read us an epigram of his own on the want of liberality which Goethe's family show about opening his house to the public. He showed us a portrait of Kleist, who shot himself, in company with Frau Vogel, near an inn on the way to Potsdam. There was no love affair between them: they were both thoroughly unhappy, — he poor and hopeless for the future, and she

suffering from an incurable disease. In the evening they both wrote, on a single sheet of paper, letters to their friends, communicating their intention (this sheet Varnhagen possesses). Early in the morning they rose, took a cup of coffee, went to the brink of a piece of water in the neighbourhood of the inn, and there shot themselves.

Du Bois Reymond spoke very decidedly of the German civilisation as inferior to the English.

Varnhagen, when well, is a regular visitor at Fräulein Solmar's, who for many years has kept an open *salon* for her friends every evening but one in the week. Here the three-cornered chair next the sofa was reserved for him, except when General Pfuel was there. This General Pfuel is a fine specimen of an old soldier, who is at the same time a man of instruction and of strong social sympathies. He has been in the service of Prussia, has been within a hair's-breadth of being frozen to death, "and so following." He spoke French admirably, and always had something interesting and characteristic to tell or say. His appreciatory groans always in the right place when G. was reading "Shylock," did us both good under the chills of a German audience. Fräulein Solmar is a remarkably accomplished woman, — probably between fifty and sixty, but of that agreeable *Wesen* which is so free from anything startling in person or manner, and so at home in everything one can talk of, that you think of her simply as a delightful presence, and not as a woman of any particular age. She converses perfectly in French, well in English, and well also, as we were told, in Italian. There is not the slightest warmth of manner or expression in her, but always the same even cheerfulness and intelligence, — in fact, she

is the true type of the mistress of the *salon.* During the first half of our stay in Berlin, we went about once a week to her house; but bad health and bad weather kept us away during the last six weeks, except for one or two evenings. Baron Sternberg, the novelist, used frequently to glide in when we were there, and cast strange cold glances around, talking quietly to Fräulein Assing or some other lady who sat in a distant parallel of latitude.

One evening a Frenchman there amused us by saying that he found in Meyerbeer's "Huguenots" the whole spirit of the epoch of Charles IX. "Lisez les Chroniques" — "de Froissart?" suggested Mlle. Solmar. "Oui, quelque chose comme ça; ou bien les Chroniques de Brantôme ou de *Mérimée;* et vous trouverez que Meyerbeer a parfaitement exprimé tout cela; du moins c'est ce que je trouve, moi." I said, "Mais peut-être, Monsieur, c'est votre génie à vous qui a fait entrer les idées dans la musique." He answered with complacent deprecation. G. looked immovably serious, but was inwardly tickled by the audacity of my compliment, and the evident acceptance of it.

A still more interesting acquaintance was Professor Gruppe, who has written great books on the Greek drama and on Philosophy; has been a political writer; is a lyric and epic poet; has invented a beautiful kind of marbled paper for binding books; is an enthusiastic huntsman, and withal, the most simple kind-hearted creature in the world. His little wife, who is about thirty years younger than himself, seems to adore him, and it is charming to see the group they and their two little children make in their dwelling up endless flights of stairs in the Leipziger Platz. Very pleasant even-

ings we had there, chatting or playing whist, or listening to readings of Gruppe's poems. We used to find him in a grey cloth *Schlafrock*, which I fancy was once a great-coat, and a brown velvet cap surmounting his thin grey hairs. I never saw a combination at all like that which makes up Gruppe's character. Talent, fertility, and versatility, that seem to indicate a fervid temperament, and yet no scintillation of all this in his talk and manner; on the contrary, he seems slow at apprehending other people's ideas, and is of an almost childish *naïveté* in the value he attaches to poor jokes and other trivialities. *Apropos* of jokes, we noticed that during the whole seven months of our stay in Germany we never heard one witticism, or even one felicitous idea or expression, from a German.

Gruppe has a delightful library, with rare books, and books too good to be rare; and we often applied to him for some of them. He lent me "Lessing," and that is an additional circumstance to remember with pleasure in connection with the Laocoon. He one evening gave us an interesting account of his work on the cosmic system of the Greeks, and read us a translation by himself of one of the Homeric hymns, — Aphrodite, — which is very beautiful, a sort of *Gegenstück* to "Der Gott und die Bajadere;" and generally we were glad when he took up the book. He read us a specimen of his epic poem, "Firdusi," which pleased us. The fable on which this poem is founded is fine. The Sultan had engaged Firdusi to write a great poem on his exploits, and had promised to pay for this 100,000 pieces (gold being understood). Firdusi had delighted in the thought of this sum, which he intended to devote to the benefit of his native

city. When the poem was delivered, and the sack of money given to Firdusi, he found that the pieces were silver! He burst into a song of scorn against the sultan, and paid the miserable sum to his bath man. Gruppe thinks Shakspeare more extensively sold in Germany than any other book, except the Bible and Schiller! One night we attempted "Brag" or "Pocher," but Gruppe presently became alarmed at G.'s play, and said, "Das würde an zwölf Groschen reichen!" He drew some Jews' faces with a pen admirably.

We were invited to meet Waagen, whom we found a very intelligent and amusing man. He told us a story about Goethe, who said of some one, "I thank thee, Almighty God, that Thou hast produced no second edition of this man!" and an amusing judgment passed on Goethe himself, that he was 'Kein dummer Mann!" Also a story of a lady who went to see him as an intellectual adorer and began to spout to him as his masterpiece, "Fest gemauert in der Erden," [1] &c.

Another pleasant friend was Edward Magnus, the portrait-painter, an acute, intelligent, kind-hearted man, with real talent in his art. He was the only German we met with who seemed conscious of his countrymen's deficiencies. He showed in every possible way a hearty desire to do us service, — sent us books, came to chat with us, showed us his portraits, and when we were going away, brought us lithographs of some paintings of his, that we might carry away a remembrance of him. He has travelled very extensively, and had much intercourse with distinguished people, and these means of culture have had some of their best effects on his fine temperament and direct truthful mind.

[1] First line of Schiller's "Song of the Bell."

He told us a rich story about Carlyle. At a dinner-party, given by Magnus in his honour, Wiese and Cornelius were deploring Goethe's want of evangelical sentiment. Carlyle was visibly uneasy, fumbling with his dinner-napkin. At last he broke out thus: "Meine Herren, kennen Sie die Anekdote von dem Manne der die Sonne lästerte, weil sie ihn seine Cigarre nicht anstecken liess?"[1]

In the little room where we used to be ushered to wait for him, there was a portrait of Thorwaldsen and one of Mendelssohn, both of whom he knew well. I was surprised to find in his *atelier* the original of the portrait of Jenny Lind, with which I was so familiar. He was going to send it, together with Sontag's portrait, to the exhibition at Paris. His brother, the chemist, was also a bright good-natured-looking man. We were invited to a large evening party at his house, and found very elegant rooms, with a remarkable assemblage of celebrated men, — Johannes Müller, Du Bois Reymond, Rose, Ehrenberg, &c., &c. Some of the women were very pretty and well dressed. The supper, brought round on trays, was well appointed; and altogether the party was well managed.

We spent one evening with Professor Stahr and his wife, — Fanny Lewald, — after their marriage. Stahr has a copy of the charming miniature of Schiller, taken when he was about thirty, — a miniature in the possession of a certain Madame von Kalb. There are the long *Gänsehals*,[2] the aquiline nose, the blue eyes and auburn hair. It

[1] 'Gentlemen, do you know the story of the man who railed at the sun because it would not light his cigar?"

[2] Goose-neck.

is a most real and striking portrait. I saw also a portrait and bust of Madame d'Agoult here, both rather handsome. The first evening Stahr told us some of the grievances which the Prussians have to bear from their Government, and amongst the rest the vexatious necessity for a "concession" or licence, before any, the simplest vocation, can be entered on. He observed, with justice, that the English are apt to suppose the German Revolution of '48 was mere restlessness and aping of other nations, when in fact there were real oppressions which the Germans had to bear, and which they had borne with a patience that the English would not imitate for a month. By far the most distinguished-looking man we saw at Berlin, and indeed next to Liszt in Germany, was Rauch the sculptor. Schöll had given G. a letter for him, and soon after it had been left at his house he called on us in the evening, and at once won our hearts by his beautiful person and the benignant and intelligent charm of his conversation. He is indeed the finest old man I ever saw, — more than seventy-six, I believe, but perfectly upright, even stately in his carriage. His features are harmonious, his complexion has a delicate freshness, his silky white hair waves gracefully round his high forehead, and his brown eyes beam with benevolence and intelligence. He is above the common height, and his stature and beauty together ennoble the grey working surtout and cap which he wears in his *atelier* into a picturesque and distinguished costume. The evening he was with us he talked delightfully of Goethe, dwelling especially on his lovable nature. He described very graphically Goethe's way of introducing subjects, showing plates, &c., bringing in the cast of Schiller's skull, and talking of it and

other little particulars of interest. We went one morning to his *atelier*, and found him superintending his pupil's work at a large group representing Moses with his hands held up by Aaron and Hur. It was extremely interesting to me to see Rauch's original little clay model of this group, for I had never seen statuary in that first stage before. The intense expression of entreaty in the face of the Moses was remarkable. But the spirit of this group is so alien to my sympathies that I could feel little pleasure in the idea of its production. On the other hand, my heart leaped at the sight of old Kant's quaint figure, of which Rauch is commissioned to produce a colossal statue for Königsberg. In another *atelier*, where the work is in a different stage, we saw a splendid marble monument, nearly completed, of the late King of Hanover. Pitiable that genius and spotless white marble should be thrown away on such human trash! Our second visit to Rauch's *atelier* was paid shortly before we left Berlin. The group of Moses, Aaron, and Hur was clothed up, and the dark-eyed olive-complexioned pupil was at work on a pretty little figure of Hope, — a child stepping forward with upturned face, a bunch of flowers in her hand. In the other *atelier* we saw a bust of Schleiermacher which, with the equestrian statue of Fritz and its pedestal, Rauch was going to send to the Paris Exhibition. Schleiermacher's face is very delicately cut, and indicates a highly susceptible temperament. The colossal head of Fritz, seen on a level with one's eye, was perfectly startling from its living expression. One can't help fancying that the head is thinking and that the eyes are seeing.

Dessoir the actor was another pleasant variety

in our circle of acquaintance. He created in us a real respect and regard for him, not only by his sincere devotion to his art, but by the superiority of feeling which shone through all the little details of his conduct and conversation. Of lowly birth and entirely self-taught, he is by nature a gentleman. Without a single physical gift as an actor, he succeeds, by force of enthusiasm and conscientious study, in arriving at a representation which commands one's attention and feelings. I was very much pleased by the simplicity with which he one day said, " Shakspeare ist mein Gott; ich habe keinen anderen Gott; " and indeed one saw that his art was a religion to him. He said he found himself inevitably led into sing-song declamation by Schiller, but with Shakspeare it was impossible to be declamatory. It was very agreeable to have him as a companion now and then in our walks, and to have him read or discuss Shakspeare for an hour or two in the evening. He told us an amusing story about his early days. When he was a youth of sixteen or seventeen, acting at Spandau, he walked to Berlin (about nine miles) and back in the evening, accompanied by a watchmaker named Naundorff, an enthusiast for the theatre. On their way Dessoir declaimed at the top of his voice, and was encouraged by the applause of his companion to more and more exertion of lungs and limbs, so that people stared at them, and followed them as if they thought them two madmen. This watchmaker was Louis XVII.! Dessoir also imitated admirably Aldridge's mode of advancing to kill Duncan, — like a wild Indian lurking for a not much wilder beast. He paid us the very pretty attention of getting up a dinner for us at Dietz's, and inviting Rötscher and Förs-

ter to meet us; and he supplied us with tickets for the theatre, which, however, was a pleasure we used sparingly. The first time we went was to see "Nathan der Weise," — a real enjoyment, for the elegant theatre was new to us, and the scenery was excellent, — better than I saw there on any subsequent occasion. Döring performed Nathan, and we thus saw him for the first time to great advantage, — for though he drags down this part, as he does all others, the character of Nathan sets limits which he cannot overstep; and though we lose most of its elevation in Döring's acting, we get, *en revanche*, an admirable ease and naturalness. His fine clear voice and perfect enunciation told excellently in the famous monologue, and in the whole scene with Saladin. Our hearts swelled and the tears came into our eyes as we listened to the noble words of dear Lessing, whose great spirit lives immortally in this crowning work of his.

Our great anxiety was to see and hear Johanna Wagner, so we took tickets for the "Orpheus," which Mlle. Solmar told us she thought her best part. We were thoroughly delighted both with her and her music. The caricatures of the Furies, the ballet-girls, and the butcher-like Greek shades in Elysium, the ugly screaming Eurydice, and the droll appearance of Timzek as Amor, in which she looked like a shop-girl who has donned a masquerade dress impromptu, without changing her head-dress, — all these absurdities were rather an amusement than a drawback to our pleasure; for the Orpheus was perfect in himself, and looked like a noble horse among mules and donkeys.

Our days are so accurately parcelled out that my time for letter-writing is rather restricted, and for every letter I write I have to leave out something

which we have learned to think necessary. We have been to hear "Fidelio" this evening, — not well executed, except so far as the orchestra was concerned; but the divine music positively triumphs over the defects of execution. One is entirely wrapt in the *idea* of the composer. Last week we had "Orpheus and Eurydice," and I heard, for the first time, at once an opera of Gluck's and Johanna Wagner. It is one of the glories of Berlin to give Gluck's operas, and it is also something of a glory to have "die Wagner." She is really a fine actress and a fine singer: her voice is not ravishing, but she is mistress of it. I thought of you that evening, and wished you could hear and see what I know would interest you greatly, — I refer rather to Gluck's opera than to Johanna Wagner. The scene in which Orpheus (Johanna Wagner) enters Tartarus, is met by the awful Shades, and charms them into ecstatic admiration till they make way for him to pass on, is very fine. The voices — except in the choruses — are all women's voices; and there are only three characters, — Orpheus, Amor, and Eurydice. One wonders that Pluto does not come as a basso; and one would prefer Mercury as a tenor to Amor in the shape of an ugly German soprano; but Gluck wished it otherwise, and the music is delightful. I am reading a charming book by Professor Stahr, — who is one of our acquaintances here, — "Torso: Kunst, Künstler, und Kunst Werke der Alten." It feeds the fresh interest I am now feeling in art. Professor Stahr is a very erudite man, and, what is very much rarer amongst Germans, a good writer, who knows how to select his materials, and has, above all, a charming talent for description. We saw at his house the other night the first por-

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 9th Jan. 1855.

trait of Schiller, which *convinces* me of a likeness to him. It is the copy of a miniature which has never been engraved. The face is less beautiful than that of the ordinary busts and portraits, but is very remarkable, — the eyes blue, the complexion very fair (the picture was taken in his youth), and the hair sunny. He has the long "goose-neck," which he describes as belonging to Carl Moor in the "Robbers," and the forehead is *fuyant* in correspondence with the skull. The piteous contrast there is between the anxiety poor Schiller is constantly expressing about a livelihood, — about the thalers he has to pay for this and the thalers he has to receive for that, — and Goethe's perfect ease in that respect! For the "History of the Netherlands" he got little more than fifteen shillings per sheet. I am very much interested in Professor Gruppe as a type of the German *Gelehrter*. He has written books on everything, — on the Greek drama, a great book on the cosmic system of the Greeks, an Epic, numberless lyric poems, &c.; he has a philosophical work and a history of literature in the press; is professor of philosophy at the University; is enthusiastic about boar-hunting, and has written a volume of hunting poems, — and *ich weiss nicht was*. Withal he is as simple as a child. When we go to see them in the evening, we find him wrapt in a moth-eaten grey coat and a cap on his head. Then he reads us a translation of one of the Homeric hymns, and goes into the most naïve *impersonal* ecstasy at the beauty of his own poetry (which is really good). The other night he read us part of an epic which is still in MS., and is to be read before the king, — such is the fashion here. And his little wife, who is about twenty years younger than himself, listens

with loving admiration. Altogether, they and their two little children are a charming picture.

We went to only one concert, for which Vivier was kind enough to send us tickets. It was given by him and Roger, assisted by Arabella Goddard and Johanna Wagner. Roger's singing of the "Erl King" was a treat not to be forgotten. He gave the full effect to Schubert's beautiful and dramatic music; and his way of falling from melody into awe-struck speech in the final words "*War todt*" abides with one. I never felt so thoroughly the beauty of that divine ballad before. The king was present in all his toothlessness and blinkingness; and the new princess from Anhalt Dessau, young and delicate-looking, was there too. Arabella Goddard played the "Harmonious Blacksmith" charmingly, and then Wagner sang badly two ineffective German songs, and Halévy's duet from the "Reine de Chypre" with Roger.

Berlin, Recollections, Nov. 1854, to March, 1855.

Vivier is amusing. He says Germans take off their hats on all possible pretexts, not for the sake of politeness, but *pour être embarrassants*. They have wide streets, simply to embarrass you, by making it impossible to descry a shop or a friend. A German always has *three* gloves, — "On ne sait pas pourquoi." There is a dog-tax in order to maintain a narrow *trottoir* in Berlin, and every one who keeps a dog feels authorised to keep the *trottoir* and move aside for no one. If he has two dogs, he drives out of the *trottoir* the man who has only one: the very dogs begin to be aware of it. If you kick one when he is off the *trottoir*, he will bear it patiently, but on the *trottoir* he resents it vehemently. He gave us quite a bit of Molière in a description of a mystification at a restaurant.

He says to the waiter, — "Vous voyez ce monsieur-là. C'est le pauvre M. Colignon." (Il faut qu'il soit quelqu'un qui prend très peu, — une tasse de café ou comme ça, et qui ne dépense pas trop.) "Je suis son ami. Il est fou. Je le garde. Combien doit-il payer?" "Un franc." "Voilà." Then Vivier goes out. Presently the so-called M. Colignon asks how much he has to pay, and is driven to exasperation by the reiterated assurance of the waiter, — "C'est payé, M. Colignon."

The first work of art really worth looking at that one sees at Berlin are the "Rosse-bändiger" in front of the palace. They are by a sculptor named Clodt, who made horses his especial study; and certainly, to us, they eclipsed the famous Colossi at Monte Cavallo, casts of which are in the new museum.

The collection of pictures at the old museum has three gems, which remain in the imagination, — Titian's Daughter, Correggio's Jupiter and Io, and his Head of Christ on the Handkerchief. I was pleased also to recognise among the pictures the one by Jan Steen, which Goethe describes in the "Wahlverwandschaften" as the model of a *tableau vivant*, presented by Luciane and her friends. It is the daughter being reproved by her father, while the mother is emptying her wine-glass. It is interesting to see the statue of Napoleon, the worker of so much humiliation to Prussia, placed opposite that of Julius Cæsar.

They were very happy months we spent at Berlin, in spite of the bitter cold which came on in January and lasted almost till we left. How we used to rejoice in the idea of our warm room and coffee as we battled our way from dinner against the wind and snow! Then came the delightful

long evening, in which we read Shakspeare, Goethe, Heine, and Macaulay, with German *Pfefferkuchen* and *Semmels* at the end to complete the *noctes cenæque deûm*.

We used often to turn out for a little walk in the evening, when it was not too cold, to refresh ourselves by a little pure air as a change from the stove-heated room. Our favourite walk was along the Linden, in the broad road between the trees. We used to pace to old Fritz's monument, which loomed up dark and mysterious against the sky. Once or twice we went along the gas-lighted walk towards Kroll's. One evening in our last week, we went on to the bridge leading to the Friedrichstadt, and there by moon- and gas-light saw the only bit of picturesqueness Berlin afforded us. The outline of the Schloss towards the water is very varied, and a light in one of the windows near the top of a tower was a happy accident. The row of houses on the other side of the water was shrouded in indistinctness, and no ugly object marred the scene. The next day, under the light of the sun it was perfectly prosaic.

Our *table d'hôte* at the Hôtel de l'Europe was so slow in its progress from one course to another, and there was so little encouragement to talk to our neighbours, that we used to take our books by way of beguiling the time. Lessing's "Hamburgische Briefe," which I am not likely to take up again, will thus remain associated in my memory with my place at the *table d'hôte*. The company here, as almost everywhere else in Berlin, was sprinkled with officers. Indeed the swords of officers threaten one's legs at every turn in the streets, and one sighs to think how these unproductive consumers of *Wurst*, with all their blue and

scarlet broadcloth, are maintained out of the pockets of the community. Many of the officers and privates are startlingly tall; indeed some of them would match, I should think, with the longest of Friedrich Wilhelm's *lange Kerle*.

It was a bitterly cold sleety morning, — the 11th of March, when we set out from Berlin, leaving behind us, alas! G.'s rug, which should have kept his feet warm on the journey. Our travelling companions to Cologne were fat Madame Roger, her little daughter, and her dog, and a Queen's messenger, — a very agreeable man, who afterwards persuaded another of the same vocation to join us for the sake of warmth. This poor man's teeth were chattering with cold, though he was wrapped in fur; and we, all fur-less as we were, pitied him, and were thankful that at least we were not feverish and ill, as he evidently was. We saw the immortal old town of Wolfenbüttel at a distance, as we rolled along: beyond this there was nothing of interest in our first day's journey, and the only incident was the condemnation of poor Madame Roger's dog to the dog-box, apart from its mistress with her warm cloaks. She remonstrated in vain with a brutal German official, and it was amusing to hear him say to her in German, "Wenn sie Deutsch nicht verstehen können." "Eh bien, — prenez la." "Ah! quel satan de pays!" was her final word, as she held out the shivering little beast. We stayed at Cologne, and next morning walked out to look at the cathedral again. Melancholy as ever in its impression upon me! From Cologne to Brussels we had some rather interesting companions, in two French artists who were on their way from Russia. Strange beings they looked to us at first in their dirty linen, Rus-

sian caps, and other queer equipments; but in this, as in many other cases, I found that a first impression was an extremely mistaken one, for instead of being, as I imagined, common uncultivated men, they were highly intelligent.

At Brussels, as we took our supper, we had the pleasure of looking at Berlioz's fine head and face, he being employed in the same way on the other side of the table. The next morning to Calais.

They were pleasant days, these at Weimar and Berlin, and they were working days. Mr. Lewes was engaged in completing his life of Goethe, which had been begun some time before, but which was now for the most part rewritten. At Weimar George Eliot wrote the article on Victor Cousin's "Madame de Sablé" for the "Westminster Review." It was begun on 5th August and sent off on 8th September. At Berlin she nearly finished the translation of Spinoza's "Ethics," — begun on 5th November, — and wrote an article on Vehse's "Court of Austria," which was begun on 23d January and finished 4th March, 1855. Besides this writing, I find the following among the books that were engaging their attention; and in collecting the names from George Eliot's Journal, I have transcribed any remarks she makes on them: —

Sainte-Beuve, Goethe's "Wahlverwandschaften," "Rameau's Neffe," "Egmont," "The Hoggarty Diamond," Moore's "Life of Sheridan," — a first-rate specimen of bad biographical writing; "Götz" and the "Bürger General," Uhland's poems, "Wilhelm Meister," Rosenkranz on the Faust Sage, Heine's poems, Shakspeare's plays ("Merchant of Venice," "Romeo and Juliet," "Julius Cæsar," — very much struck with the masculine style of this play, and its vigorous moderation, compared with "Romeo and Juliet," — "Antony and Cleopatra," "Henry IV.," "Othello," "As You Like

It," "Lear," — sublimely powerful, — "Taming of the Shrew," "Coriolanus," "Twelfth Night," "Measure for Measure," "Midsummer Night's Dream," "Winter's Tale," "Richard III.," "Hamlet"); Lessing's "Laocoon," — the most un-German of all the German books that I have ever read. The style is strong, clear, and lively; the thoughts acute and pregnant. It is well adapted to rouse an interest both in the classics and in the study of art; "Emilia Galotti" seems to me a wretched mistake of Lessing's. The Roman myth of Virginius is grand, but the situation transported to modern times and divested of its political bearing is simply shocking. Read "Briefe über Spinoza" (Jacobi's), "Nathan der Weise," Fanny Lewald's "Wandlungen," "Minna von Barnhelm," "Italiänische Reise," the "Residence in Rome:" a beautiful description of Rome and the Coliseum by moonlight, — a fire made in the Coliseum sending its smoke, silvered by the moonlight, through the arches of the mighty walls. Amusing story of Goethe's landlady's cat worshipping Jupiter by licking his beard, — a miracle in her esteem, explained by Goethe as a discovery the cat had made of the oil lodging in the undulations of the beard. "Residence in Naples," — pretty passage about a star seen through a chink in the ceiling as he lay in bed. It is remarkable that when Goethe gets to Sicily, he is for the first time in Italy enthusiastic in his descriptions of natural beauty. Read Scherr's "Geschichte Deutscher Cultur und Sitte," — much interested in his sketch of German poetry in the middle ages: "Iphigenia." Looked into the "Xenien," and amused ourselves with their pointlessness. "Hermann und Dorothea." "Tasso," "Wanderjahre," — *à mourir*

d'ennui, — Heine's "Geständnisse," — immensely amused with the wit of it in the first fifty pages, but afterwards it burns low, and the want of principle and purpose make it wearisome. Lessing's "Hamburgische Briefe." Read Goethe's wonderful observations on Spinoza. Particularly struck with the beautiful modesty of the passage in which he says he cannot presume to say that he thoroughly understands Spinoza. Read "Dichtung und Wahrheit," Knight's "Studies of Shakspeare." Talked of the "Wahlverwandschaften" with Stahr, — he finding fault with the *dénouement*, which I defended. Read Stahr's "Torso," — too long-winded a style for reading aloud. Knight's "History of Painting." Compared several scenes of "Hamlet" in Schlegel's translation with the original. It is generally very close, and often admirably well done: but Shakspeare's strong concrete language is almost always weakened. For example, "Though this hand were *thicker than* itself in brother's blood," is rendered, "Auch um und um in Bruder's Blut getauchet." The prose speeches of Hamlet lose all their felicity in the translation. Read Stahr on the Eginetan Sculptures, "Die Neue Melusine," "West-Östliche Divan," Gervinus on Shakspeare, — found it unsatisfactory, — Stahr's "Ein Jahr in Italien," — the description of Florence excellent. Read the wondrously beautiful "Römische Elegien" again, and some of the Venetian Epigrams, Vehse's "Court of Austria," — called on Miss Assing to try and borrow the book from Varnhagen. He does not possess it, so G. called on Vehse, and asked him to lend it to me. He was very much pleased to do so. Read the "Zueignung," the "Gedichte," and several of the ballads. Looked

through Wraxall's "Memoirs." Read Macaulay's "History of England." Wrote article on Stahr.

This writing and reading, combined with visiting, theatre-going, and opera-going, make a pretty full life for these eight months, — a striking contrast to the coming months of complete social quietness in England. Both lives had their attractions, the superficial aspects of which may be summed up in a passage from the Journal, dated 13th March, 1855, on arrival at the Lord Warden Hotel at Dover: —

English mutton and an English fire were likely to be appreciated by creatures who had had eight months of Germany, with its questionable meat and its stove-heated rooms. The taste and quietude of a first-rate English hotel were also in striking contrast with the heavy finery, the noise, and the indiscriminate smoking of German inns. But after all, Germany is no bad place to live in; and the Germans, to counterbalance their want of taste and politeness, are at least free from the bigotry of exclusiveness of their more refined cousins. I even long to be amongst them again, — to see Dresden, and Munich, and Nürnberg, and the Rhine country. May the day soon come!

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER VI

JULY, 1854, TO MARCH, 1855

Leaves London with Mr. Lewes for Antwerp — Rubens's pictures — Cologne — Dr. Brabant and Strauss — Weimar — Schöll — The Dichter Zimmer — Sauppe — Tiefurt — Ettersburg — Arthur Helps — Gabel-Bach and Kickel-hahn — Liszt — Wagner's operas — "Der Freischütz" — Schiller's house — Goethe's house — Gartenhaus — Ober Weimar — The Webicht — Marquis de Ferrière — Liszt anecdotes — Cornelius — Raff — Princess Wittgenstein — Liszt's playing — Scheffer's picture — Expenses at Weimar — Leave for Berlin — Meet Varnhagen — Thiergarten — Acquaintances in Berlin — Fräulein Solmar — Professor Gruppe — Epic of Firdusi — Waagen — Edward Magnus — Professor Stahr and Fanny Lewald — Rauch the sculptor — Kant's statue — Dessoir the actor — "Nathan der Weise" — Döring's acting — Johanna Wagner — Letter to Miss Hennell — "Fidelio" — Reading Stahr's "Torso" — Likeness of Schiller — Vivier — Roger and Arabella Goddard — The Rosse-bändiger — Pictures — Cold in Berlin — View of Schloss from bridge — Leave Berlin for England — Books read — Article written on Madame de Sablé — Translation of Spinoza's "Ethics" — Article on Vehse's "Court of Austria" — Article on Stahr.

CHAPTER VII

MARCH 14. — Took lodgings at 1 Sydney Place, Dover. Journal, March, 1855.

March 15. — A lovely day. As I walked up the Castle hill this afternoon, the town, with its background of softly rounded hills shrouded in sleepy haze, its little lines of water looking golden in the sun, made a charming picture. I have written the preface to the "Third Book of Ethics," read Scherr, and Shakspeare's "Venus and Adonis."

March 16. — I read Shakspeare's "Passionate Pilgrim" at breakfast, and found a sonnet in which he expresses admiration of Spenser (Sonnet VI.): —

G. writes that this sonnet is Barnfield's. [Note written later.]

"Dowland to thee is dear, whose heavenly touch
Upon the lute doth ravish human sense;
Spenser to me, whose deep conceit is such
As, passing all conceit, needs no defence."

I must send word of this to G., who has written in his "Goethe" that Shakspeare has left no line in praise of a contemporary. I could not resist the temptation of walking out before I sat down to work. Came in at half-past ten, and translated Spinoza till nearly one. Walked out again till two. After dinner read "Two Gentlemen of Verona," and some of the Sonnets. That play disgusted me more than ever in the final scene, where Valentine, on Proteus's mere begging par-

don, when he has no longer any hope of gaining his ends, says "All that was mine in Silvia, I give thee!" Silvia standing by. Walked up the Castle hill again, and came in at six. Read Scherr, and found an important hint that I have made a mistake in a sentence of my article on Austria about the death of Franz von Sickingen.

I daresay you will be surprised to see that I write from Dover. We left Berlin on the 11th. I have taken lodgings here for a little while, until Mr. Lewes has concluded some arrangements in London; and with the aid of lovely weather, am even enjoying my solitude, though I don't mind how soon it ends. News of you all at Rosehill — how health, and business, and all other things are faring — would be very welcome to me, if you can find time for a little note of homely details. I am well and calmly happy, — feeling much stronger and clearer in mind for the last eight months of new experience. We were sorry to leave our quiet rooms and agreeable friends in Berlin, though the place itself is certainly ugly, and *am Ende* must become terribly wearisome for those who have not a vocation there. We went again and again to the new museum to look at the casts of the Parthenon Sculptures, and registered a vow that we would go to feast on the sight of the originals the first day we could spare in London. I had never cast more than a fleeting look on them before, but now I can in some degree understand the effect they produced on their first discovery.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 16th March, 1855.

March 25. — A note from Mr. Chapman, in which he asks me to undertake part of the Contemporary Literature for the "Westminster Review."

Journal, 1855.

April 18. — Came to town, to lodgings in Bayswater.

April 23. — Fixed on lodgings at East Sheen.

April 25. — Went to the British Museum.

April 28. — Finished article on Weimar, for "Fraser."

During this month George Eliot was finishing the translating and revising of Spinoza's Ethics, and was still reading Scherr's book, Schrader's "German Mythology,"—a "poor book,"—"The Tempest," "Macbeth," "Niebelungenlied," "Romeo and Juliet," article on Dryden in the "Westminster," "Reineke Fuchs," "Genesis of Science," Gibbon, "Henry V.," "Henry VIII.," first, second, and third parts of "Henry VI.," "Richard II."

May 2. — Came to East Sheen, and settled in our lodgings.

May 28. — Sent Belles Lettres section to "Westminster Review." During May several articles were written for the "Leader."

June 13. — Began Part IV. of Spinoza's Ethics. Began also to read Cumming for article in the "Westminster." We are reading in the evenings now Sydney Smith's letters, Boswell, Whewell's "History of Inductive Sciences," "The Odyssey," and occasionally Heine's "Reisebilder." I began the second book of the "Iliad," in Greek, this morning.

June 21. — Finished article on Brougham's "Lives of Men of Letters."

June 23. — Read "Lucrezia Floriani." We are reading White's "History of Selborne" in the evening, with Boswell and the "Odyssey."

I have good hope that you will be deeply interested in the "Life of Goethe." It is a book full

of feeling, as well as of thought and information, and I even think it will make you love Goethe as well as admire him. Eckermann's is a wonderful book, but only represents Goethe at eighty. We were fortunate enough to be in time to see poor Eckermann before his *total* death. His mind was already half gone, but the fine brow and eyes harmonised entirely with the interest we had previously felt in him. We saw him in a small lodging, surrounded by singing birds, and tended by his son, — an intelligent youth of sixteen, who showed some talent in drawing. I have written a castigation of Brougham for the "Leader," and shall be glad if your sympathy goes along with it. Varnhagen has written "Denkwürdigkeiten," and all sorts of literature, and is, or rather was, the husband of *Rahel*, the greatest of German women.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 23d June, 1855.

It was surely you who wrote the notice of the "Westminster" in the "Herald" (Coventry), which we received this morning. I am very much pleased with your appreciation of Mr. Lewes's article. You hardly do justice to Froude's article on Spinoza. I don't at all agree with Froude's own views, but I think his account of Spinoza's doctrines admirable. Mr. Lewes is still sadly ailing, — tormented with tooth- and face-ache. This is a terrible trial to us poor scribblers, to whom health is money, as well as all other things worth having. I have just been reading that Milton suffered from indigestion, — quite an affecting fact to me. I send you a letter which I have had from Barbara Smith. I think you will like to see such a manifestation of her strong, noble nature.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 21st July, 1855.

On 1st August, 1855, Mr. Lewes went down to Ramsgate for change, taking his three boys with him for a week's holiday. Meantime George Eliot was continuing her article-writing, and in this week wrote an article for the "Leader," having written one for the same journal three weeks before. On 22d August she wrote another article for the "Leader," and on the 24th she finished the one on Cumming for the "Westminster." Mr. C. Lewes tells me that he remembers it was after reading this article that his father was prompted to say to George Eliot, whilst walking one day with her in Richmond Park, that it convinced him of the true genius in her writing. Mr. Lewes was not only an accomplished and practised literary critic, but he was also gifted with the inborn insight accompanying a fine artistic temperament, which gave unusual weight to his judgment. Up to this time he had not been quite sure of anything beyond great talent in her productions.

The first three weeks in September were again busily occupied in article-writing. She contributed three papers to the "Leader," as well as the Belles Lettres section for the October number of the "Westminster." On the 19th September they left East Sheen, and after spending a couple of weeks at Worthing for a sea change, they took rooms at 8 Park Shot, Richmond, which remained their home for more than three years. Here some of George Eliot's most memorable literary work was accomplished. Both she and Mr. Lewes were now working very hard for what would bring immediate profit, as they had to support not only themselves but his children and their mother. They had only one sitting-room between them; and I remember, in a walk on St. George's Hill, near Weybridge, in 1871, she told me that the scratching of another pen used to affect her nerves to such an extent that it nearly drove her wild. On the 9th October she finished an article on Margaret Fuller and Mary Wollstonecraft, and on the 12th October one on Carlyle for the "Leader," and began an article on Heine for the January number of the "Westminster." In October there are the following letters to the Brays: —

Since you have found out the "Cumming," I write by to-day's post just to say that it *is* mine, but also to beg that you will not mention it as such to any one likely to transmit the information to London, as we are keeping the authorship a secret. The article appears to have produced a strong impression, and that impression would be a little counteracted if the author were known to be a *woman*. I have had a letter addressed "to the author of Article No. 4," begging me to print it separately, "for the good of mankind in general"! It is so kind of you to rejoice in anything I do at all well. I am dreadfully busy again, for I am going to write an article for the "Westminster Review" again, besides my other work. We enjoy our new lodgings very much, — everything is the pink of order and cleanliness.

Letter to Chas. Bray, Monday, Oct. (?) 1855.

Why you should object to Herbert Spencer speaking of Sir William Hamilton's contributions to a theory of perception as "valuable," I am unable to conceive. Sir William Hamilton has been of service to him as well as to others; and instead of repressing acknowledgments of merit in others, I should like them to be more freely given. I see no dignity or anything else that is good in ignoring one's fellow-beings. Herbert Spencer's views, like every other man's views, could not have existed without the substratum laid by his predecessors. But perhaps you mean something that I fail to perceive. Your bit of theology is very fine. Here is a delicious Hibernicism in return. In a treatise on consumption, sent yesterday, the writer says: "There is now hardly any *difference* on this subject, — at least *I* feel none." Our life has no in-

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 16th Oct. 1855.

cidents except such as take place in our own brains, and the occasional arrival of a longer letter than usual. You are always read aloud and enjoyed. Nevertheless our life is intensely occupied, and the days are far too short. We are reading Gall's "Anatomie et Physiologie du Cerveau" and Carpenter's "Comparative Physiology," aloud in the evenings; and I am trying to fix some knowledge about plexuses and ganglia in my soft brain, which generally only serves me to remember that there is something I ought to remember, and to regret that I did not put the something down in my note-book. For "Live and learn," we should sometimes read, "Live and grow stupid."

Letter to Chas. Bray, 21st Nov. 1855.

You will receive by rail to-morrow a copy of the "Life and Works of Goethe" (published on 1st November), which I hope you will accept as a keepsake from me. I should have been glad to send it you earlier, but as Mr. Lewes has sold the copyright of the first edition, he has only a small number of copies at his disposal, and so I doubted whether I ought to ask for one. I think you will find much to interest you in the book. I can't tell you how I value it, as the best product of a mind which I have every day more reason to admire and love. We have had much gratification in the expression of individual opinion. The press is very favourable, but the notices are for the most part too idiotic to give us much pleasure, except in a pecuniary point of view. I am going out to-day, for the first time for nearly a fortnight.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 29th Nov. 1855.

I have just finished a long article on Heine for the "Westminster Review," which none of you will like. *En revanche*, Mr. Lewes has written one on Lions and Lion Hunters, which you will find amusing.

On the 12th December the Belles Lettres section for the January number of the "Westminster Review" was finished and sent off, and the next entry in the Journal is dated —

Dec. 24, 1855. — For the last ten days I have done little, owing to headache and other ailments. Began the "Antigone," read Von Bohlen on Genesis, and Swedenborg. Mr. Chapman wants me to write an article on Missions and Missionaries, for the April number of the "Westminster," but I think I shall not have it ready till the July number. In the afternoon I set out on my journey to see my sister, and arrived at her house about eight o'clock, finding her and her children well.

Journal, 1855.

Dec. 29, 1855. — Returned to Richmond. G. away at Vernon Hill (Arthur Helps's), having gone thither on Wednesday.

Dec. 30, 1855. — Read the "Shaving of Shagpat" (George Meredith's).

Dec. 31, 1855. — Wrote a review of "Shagpat."

Jan. 1, 1856. — Read Kingsley's 'Greek Heroes," and began a review of Von Bohlen.

Journal, 1856.

Jan. 5, 1856. — G. came home.

Jan. 6, 1856. — Began to revise Book IV. of Spinoza's "Ethics," and continued this work through the week, being able to work but slowly. Finished Kahnis' "History of German Protestantism."

Jan. 16, 1856. — Received a charming letter from Barbara Smith, with a petition to Parliament that women may have a right to their earnings.

I believe there have been at least a thousand copies of the "Goethe" sold, which is a wonderfully good sale in less three months for a 30*s.*

book. We have a charming collection of letters, both from remarkable acquaintances and remarkable non-acquaintances, expressing enthusiastic delight in the book, — letters all the more delightful because they are quite spontaneous, and spring from a generous wish to let the author know how highly the writers value his work. If you want some idle reading, get the "Shaving of Shagpat," which I think you will say deserves all the praise I gave it.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 18th Jan. 1856.

Feb. 19, 1856. — Since the 6th January I have been occupied with Spinoza; and, except a review of Griswold's "American Poets," have done nothing else but translate the Fifth Book of the "Ethics," and revise the whole of my translation from the beginning. This evening I have finished my revision.

Journal, 1856.

I was so glad to have a little news of you. I should like to hear much oftener, but our days are so accurately parcelled out among regular occupations, that I rarely manage to do anything not included in the programme; and without reading Mrs. Barbauld on the "Inconsistency of Human Expectations," I know that receiving letters is inconsistent with not writing any. Have you seen any numbers of the "Saturday Review," a new journal, on which "all the talents" are engaged? It is not properly a newspaper, but — what its title expresses — a political and literary Review. We are delighting ourselves with Ruskin's third volume, which contains some of the finest writing I have read for a long time (among recent books). I read it aloud for an hour or so after dinner; then we jump to the old dramatists, when Mr. Lewes reads to me as long as his voice will hold out, and after this

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 19th Feb. 1856.

we wind up the evening with Rymer Jones's "Animal Kingdom," by which I get a confused knowledge of branchiæ, and such things, — perhaps, on the whole, a little preferable to total ignorance. These are our *noctes* — without *cenæ* for the present — occasionally diversified by very dramatic singing of Figaro, &c., which, I think, must alarm "that good man, the clergyman," who sits below us. We have been half laughing, half indignant over Alison's new volume of his "History of Europe," in which he undertakes to give an account of German literature.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 25th Feb. 1856.

What you tell me of Harriet Martineau interests me very much. I feel for her terrible bodily suffering, and think of her with deep respect and admiration. Whatever may have been her mistakes and weaknesses, the great and good things she has done far outweigh them; and I should be grieved if anything in her memoir should cast a momentary shadow over the agreeable image of her that the world will ultimately keep in its memory. I wish less of our piety were spent on imaginary perfect goodness, and more given to real *im*perfect goodness.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, end of Feb. 1856.

I am very happy for you to keep the sheets, and to get signatures (for the Women's Petition that they should have legal right to their own earnings). Miss Barbara Smith writes that she must have them returned to her before the 1st of March. I am glad you have taken up the cause, for I do think that, with proper provisos and safeguards, the proposed law would help to raise the position and character of women. It is one round of a long ladder stretching far beyond our lives.

During March George Eliot wrote only the Belles Lettres section for the April number of the "Westminster," having resigned the subject of "Missions" to Harriet Martineau. She also wrote two articles for the "Saturday Review," and two for the "Leader." And there are the following letters in March to the Brays, in which allusion is made to their leaving the old home at Rosehill, owing to the unsatisfactory state of the Coventry business.

Letter to Chas. Bray, 26th March, 1856.

We are flourishing in every way except in health. Mr. Lewes's head is still infirm, but he manages, nevertheless, to do twice as much work as other people. I am always a croaker, you know, but my ailments are of a small kind, their chief symptoms being a muddled brain; and as my pen is not of the true literary order which will run along without the help of brains, I don't get through so much work as I should like. By the way, when the Spinoza comes out, be so good as not to mention my name in connection with it. I particularly wish not to be known as the translator of the "Ethics," for reasons which it would be "too tedious to mention." You don't know what a severely practical person I am become, and what a sharp eye I have to the main chance. I keep the purse, and dole out sovereigns with all the pangs of a miser. In fact, if you were to feel my bump of acquisitiveness, I daresay you would find it in a state of inflammation, like the "veneration" of that clergyman to whom Mr. Donovan said, "Sir, you have recently been engaged in prayer." I hope you recognised your own wit about the one-eyed dissenters, which was quoted in the "Leader" some time ago. You always said no one did so much justice to your jokes as I did.

Letter to Chas. Bray, 31st March, 1856.

My mind is more rebellious than yours, and I can't help being saddened by the idea of you and Cara being in any other home than the dear old one. But I know that your cheerful courage is yet stronger in deed than in word. Will not business or pleasure bring you to London soon, and will you not come to see us? We can give you a bed, — not a sumptuous one, but one which you will perhaps not find intolerable for a night. I know the trip up the Thames is charming, and we should like to do it with you, but I don't think we can manage it this summer. We are going to send or take the boys (Mr. Lewes's sons) to school in Germany at midsummer, and are at present uncertain about our arrangements. If we can *send* them, we shall go to the coast as soon as the warm weather comes, and remain there for three months. But our plans are not yet crystallised.

Letter to Chas. Bray, 1st April, 1856.

After I wrote you yesterday morning we had a letter from Germany which has made Mr. Lewes incline to defer sending the boys thither till next year. But he is anxious to remove them from their present school; and in the course of our consultations on the subject, we thought of Mr. John Sibree as a person in whom we should feel confidence as to the moral influence he would exercise as a tutor. The risk of placing children with entire strangers is terrible. So I tease you with another letter to ask you if Mr. J. Sibree continues in the same position as formerly, and if he is still anxious to obtain pupils. What a delicious day. We are going to have a holiday at the Zoological Gardens.

Thank you for taking the trouble to write me a full account of matters so interesting to me. I

hope you will be able thoroughly to enjoy this last precious summer on the pretty lawn, where it is one of my pleasures on sunshiny days to think of you all strolling about or seated on the Bearskin. We are very thankful for the Hofwyl circular, and have almost decided to send the two eldest boys there. But it is necessary to weigh all things carefully before coming to a determination; as not being either swindlers or philanthropists, we don't like to incur obligations which there is not a reasonable certainty of our being able to meet. I am much obliged to Mr. Bray, too, for sending Mr. John Sibree's letter. Mr. Lewes had already received an answer from him declining his proposition, but we were interested to read his very characteristic letter to his sister, which proved to Mr. Lewes that I had given him a correct description of the man.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 7th April, 1856.

The next few weeks are, perhaps, the most signally important and interesting of all in George Eliot's development. There are unmistakable signs of the rising of the sap of creative production.

In the middle of April Mr. Herbert Spencer, who had been away from London for some time, returned to town, and dined with them at Park Shot on the 15th, and on the 18th they went with him to Sydenham. On the 22d April George Eliot began her article on Young; and on the 29th she began to read Riehl's book,[1] *on which she was to write another article for the "Westminster." On the 8th of May they set off for Ilfracombe, and we have the following "recollections" of that place: —*

It was a cold unfriendly day — the 8th of May — on which we set out for Ilfracombe with our hamper of glass jars, which we meant for our sea-side viva-

[1] "Land und Volk."

rium. We had to get down at Windsor, and were not sorry that the interval was long enough to let us walk round the Castle, which I had never seen before except from a distance. The famous "slopes," the avenues in the Park, and the distant landscape looked very lovely in the fresh and delicate greens of spring; and the Castle is surely the most delightful royal residence in the world. We took our places from Windsor all the way to Exeter; and at Bristol, where we had to wait three hours, the misery of my terrible headache was mitigated by the interest we felt in seeing the grand old Church of St. Mary Redcliffe, forever associated with the memory of Chatterton —

Ilfracombe, Recollections, May, 1856.

> "It stands, the maestrie of a human hand,
> The pride of Bristowe and the western land."

It was cheering the next morning after our arrival at Ilfracombe to get up with a head rather less aching, and to walk up and down the little garden of Runnymede Villa in the bright sunshine. I had a great deal of work before me, — the writing of an article on Riehl's books, which I had not half read, as well as the article on Belles Lettres; but my head was still dizzy, and it seemed impossible to sit down to writing at once in these new scenes, so we determined to spend the day in explorations.

From our windows we had a view of the higher part of the town, and generally it looked uninteresting enough; but what is it that light cannot transfigure into beauty? One evening after a shower, as the sun was setting over the sea behind us, some peculiar arrangement of clouds threw a delicious evening light on the irregular cluster of houses, and merged the ugliness of their forms in

an exquisite flood of colour, — as a stupid person is made glorious by a noble deed. A perfect rainbow arched over the picture. From one end of the Capstone we have an admirable bit for a picture. In the background rises old Helesborough, jutting out far into the sea, — rugged and rocky as it fronts the waves, green and accessible landward: in front of this stands Lantern Hill a picturesque mass of green and grey, surmounted by an old bit of building that looks as if it were the habitation of some mollusc that had secreted its shell from the material of the rock; and quite in the foreground, contrasting finely in colour with the rest, are some lower perpendicular rocks of dark-brown tints, patched here and there with vivid green. In hilly districts, where houses and clusters of houses look so tiny against the huge limbs of mother earth, one cannot help thinking of man as a parasitic animal, — an epizoon making his abode in the skin of the planetary organism. In a flat country, a house or a town looks imposing: there is nothing to rival it in height, and we may imagine the earth a mere pedestal for us. But when one sees a house stuck on the side of a great hill, and still more, a number of houses looking like a few barnacles clustered on the side of a great rock, we begin to think of the strong family likeness between ourselves and all other building, burrowing, house-appropriating, and shell-secreting animals. The difference between a man with his house and a mollusc with its shell lies in the number of steps or phenomena interposed between the fact of individual existence and the completion of the building Whatever other advantages we may have over molluscs and insects in our habitations, it is

Ilfracombe, Recollections, May, June, 1865.

clear that their architecture has the advantage of ours in beauty, — at least, considered as the architecture of the species. Look at man in the light of a shell-fish, and it must be admitted that his shell is generally ugly; and it is only after a great many more " steps or phenomena " that he secretes here and there a wonderful shell in the shape of a temple or a palace.

On our first zoophyte hunt it was characteristic of the wide difference there is between having eyes and *seeing*, that in this region of sea-anemones, where the Mesembryanthemum especially is as plenty as blackberries, we climbed about for two hours without seeing *one* anemone, and went in again with scarcely anything but a few stones and weeds to put into our jars. On our next hunt, however, after we had been out some time, G. exclaimed, " I see an anemone! " And we were immensely excited by the discovery of this little red Mesembryanthemum, which we afterwards disdained to gather, as much as if it had been a nettle. It was a *crescendo* of delight when we found a " strawberry," and a *fortissimo* when I for the first time saw the pale fawn-coloured tentacles of an *Anthea cereus* viciously waving like little serpents in a low-tide pool. But not a polype for a long, long while could even G. detect, after all his reading, — so necessary is it for the eye to be educated by objects as well as ideas. Every day I gleaned some little bit of naturalistic experience, either through G.'s calling on me to look through the microscope, or from hunting on the rocks; and this in spite of my preoccupation with my article, which I worked at considerably *à contre-cœur*, despairing of it ever being worth anything. When at last, by the 17th of June, both my articles were

despatched, I felt delightfully at liberty, and determined to pay some attention to seaweeds, which I had never seen in such beauty as at Ilfracombe. For hitherto I had been chiefly on chalky and sandy shores, where there were no rock-pools to show off the lovely colours and forms of the algæ. There are tide-pools to be seen almost at every other step on the shore at Ilfracombe; and I shall never forget their appearance when we first arrived there. The *Corallina officinalis* was then in its greatest perfection, and with its purple-pink fronds threw into relief the dark olive fronds of the Laminariæ on one side and the vivid green of the Ulva and Enteromorpha on the other. After we had been there a few weeks, the Corallina was faded; and I noticed the *Mesogloia vermicularis* and the *M. virescens*, which look very lovely in the water from the white cilia, which make the most delicate fringe to their yellow-brown, whip-like fronds, and some of the common Polysiphoniæ. These tide-pools made me quite in love with seaweeds, so I took up Landsborough's book and tried to get a little more light on their structure and history.

Our zoological expeditions alternated with delicious inland walks. I think the country looked its best when we arrived. It was just that moment in spring when the leaves are in full leaf, but still keep their delicate varieties of colouring, and that *transparency* which belongs only to this season. And the furze was in its golden glory! It was almost like the fading away of the evening red, when the furze blossoms died off from the hills, and the only contrast left was that of the marly soil with the green crops and woods. The primroses were the contemporaries of the furze,

and sprinkled the sides of the hills with their pale stars almost as plentifully as daisies or buttercups elsewhere. But the great charm of all Devonshire lanes is the springs that you detect gurgling in shady recesses, covered with liverwort, with here and there waving tufts of fern and other broad-leaved plants that love obscurity and moisture.

We seemed to make less of our evenings at Ilfracombe than we have ever done elsewhere. We used often to be tired with our hunting or walking; and we were reading books which did not make us take them up very eagerly, — Gosse's "Rambles on the Devonshire Coast," for example; Trench's "Calderon," and other volumes, taken up in a desultory way. One bit of reading we had there, however, which interested me deeply. It was Masson's "Life of Chatterton," which happily linked itself with the impressions I had received from the sight of the old church at Bristol.

Mr. Tugwell's (the curate) acquaintance was a real acquisition to us, not only because he was a companion and helper in zoological pursuits, but because to know him was to know of another sweet nature in the world. It is always good to know, if only in passing, a charming human being; it refreshes one like flowers, and woods, and clear brooks. One Sunday evening we walked up to his pretty house to carry back some proofs of his, and he induced us to go in and have coffee with him. He played on his harmonium, and we chatted pleasantly. The last evening of our stay at Ilfracombe he came to see us in Mrs. Webster's drawing-room, and we had music till nearly eleven o'clock, — a pleasant recollection!

We only twice took the walk beyond Watermouth towards Berrynarbor. The road lies

through what are called the "Meadows," which look like a magnificent park. A stream, fringed with wild flowers and willows, runs along the valley, two or three yards from the side of the road. This stream is clear as crystal, and about every twenty yards it falls over a little artificial precipice of stones. The long grass was waving in all the glory of June, before the mower has come to make it suffer a "love change" from beauties into sweet odours; and the slopes on each side of us were crowned or clothed with fine trees. The last time we went through these meadows was on our last day at Ilfracombe. Such sunlight and such deep peace on the hills and by the stream! Coming back, we rested on a gate under the trees, and a blind man came up to rest also. He told us, in his slow way, what a fine "healthy spot" this was, — yes, a very healthy spot, — a healthy spot. And then we went on our way, and saw his face no more.

I have talked of the Ilfracombe lanes without describing them, for to describe them one ought to know the names of all the lovely wild flowers that cluster on their banks. Almost every yard of these banks is a "Hunt" picture, — a delicious crowding of mosses, and delicate trefoil, and wild strawberries, and ferns great and small. But the crowning beauty of the lanes is the springs that gush out in little recesses by the side of the road, — recesses glossy with liverwort and feathery with fern. Sometimes you have the spring when it has grown into a brook, either rushing down a miniature cataract by the lane-side, or flowing gently as a "braided streamlet" across your path. I never before longed so much to know the names of things as during this visit to Ilfracombe. The desire is

part of the tendency that is now constantly growing in me to escape from all vagueness and inaccuracy into the daylight of distinct vivid ideas. The mere fact of naming an object tends to give definiteness to our conception of it. We have then a sign which at once calls up in our minds the distinctive qualities which mark out for us that particular object from all others.

We ascended the Tors only twice; for a tax of 3*d.* per head was demanded on this luxury, and we could not afford a sixpenny walk very frequently: yet the view is perhaps the very finest to be had at Ilfracombe. Bay behind bay, fringed with foam, and promontory behind promontory, each with its peculiar shades of purple light, — the sweep of the Welsh coast faintly visible in the distance, and the endless expanse of sea flecked with ships stretching on our left.

One evening we went down to the shore through the " Tunnels " to see the sunset. Standing in the " Ladies' Cove," we had before us the sharp fragments of rock jutting out of the waves and standing black against the orange and crimson sky. How lovely to look into that brilliant distance and see the ship on the horizon seeming to sail away from the cold and dim world behind it right into the golden glory! I have always that sort of feeling when I look at sunset: it always seems to me that there in the West lies a land of light and warmth and love.

On the 26th of June we said good-bye to Ilfracombe. The sight of the cockle-women at Swansea, where we had to wait, would make a fine subject for a painter. One of them was the grandest woman I ever saw, — six feet high, carrying herself like a Greek warrior, and treading the earth

with unconscious majesty. Her face was weather-beaten and wizened, but her eyes were bright and piercing, and the lines of her face, with its high cheek-bones, strong and characteristic. The guard at the railway station told us that one of the porters had been insolent the other day to a cockle-woman, and that she immediately pitched him off the platform into the road below!

Letter to the Brays, 6th June, 1856, from Ilfracombe.

When we arrived here, I had not even read a great book on which I had engaged to write a long article by the beginning of this month; so that between work and zoology and bodily ailments my time has been full to overflowing. We are enchanted with Ilfracombe. I really think it is the loveliest sea place I ever saw, from the combination of fine rocky coast with exquisite inland scenery. But it would not do for any one who can't climb rocks and mount perpetual hills; for the peculiarity of this country is that it is all hill and no valley. You have no sooner got to the foot of one hill than you begin to mount another. You would laugh to see our room decked with yellow pie-dishes, a *foot pan*, glass jars and phials, all full of zoophytes, or molluscs, or annelids, — and still more, to see the eager interest with which we rush to our "preserves" in the morning to see if there has been any mortality among them in the night. We have made the acquaintance of a charming little zoological curate here, who is a delightful companion on expeditions, and is most good-natured in lending and giving apparatus and "critturs" of all sorts. Mr. Pigott [1] is coming here in his brother's yacht at the end of June, and we hope then to go to

[1] Mr. Edward Smyth Pigott, who remained to the end of their lives a very close and much valued friend of Mr. Lewes and George Eliot.

Clovelly, — Kingsley's Clovelly, — and perhaps other places on the coast that we can't reach on foot. After this we mean to migrate to Tenby, for the sake of making acquaintance with its molluscs and medusæ.

Letter to Mrs. Peter Taylor, 8th June, 1856.

I received your kind letter only yesterday, but I write a few words in answer at once, lest, as it so often happens, delay should beget delay.

It is never too late to write generous words, and although circumstances are not likely to allow of our acquiring a more intimate knowledge of each other from personal intercourse, it will always be a pleasant thought to me that you have remembered me kindly, and interpreted me nobly. You are one of the minority who know how to "use their imagination in the service of charity."

I have suffered so much from misunderstanding created by letters, even to old friends, that I never write on private personal matters, unless it be a rigorous duty or necessity to do so. Some little phrase or allusion is misinterpreted, and on this false basis a great fabric of misconception is reared, which even explanatory conversations will not remove. Life is too precious to be spent in this weaving and unweaving of false impressions, and it is better to live quietly on under some degree of misrepresentation than to attempt to remove it by the uncertain process of letter-writing.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 29th June, 1856.

Yes, indeed, I do remember old Tenby days, and had set my heart on being in the very same house again; but, alas! it had just been let. It is immensely smartened up, like the place generally, since those old times, and is proportionately less desirable for quiet people who have no flounces and do not subscribe

to new churches. Tenby looks insignificant in picturesqueness after Ilfracombe; but the two objects that drew us hither, zoology and health, will flourish none the worse for the absence of tall precipices and many-tinted rocks. The air is delicious, — soft but not sultry, — and the sands and bathing such as are to be found nowhere else. St. Catherine's Rock with its caverns is our paradise. We go there with baskets, hammers and chisels, and jars and phials, and come home laden with spoils. Altogether we are contented to have been driven away from Ilfracombe by the cold wind, since a new place is new experience, and Mr. Lewes has never been here before. To me there is the additional pleasure — half melancholy — of recalling all the old impressions and comparing them with the new. I understand your wish to have as much of Rosehill as possible this year, and I am so glad that you will associate a visit from Herbert Spencer with this last summer. I suppose he is with you now. If so, give him my very evil regards, and tell him that because he has not written to us we will diligently *not* tell him a great many things he would have liked to know. We have a project of going into St. Catherine's caverns with lanterns, some night when the tide is low, about eleven, for the sake of seeing the zoophytes preparing for their midnight revels. The Actiniæ, like other belles, put on their best faces on such occasions. Two things we have lost by leaving Ilfracombe, for which we have no compensation, — the little zoological curate, Mr. Tugwell, who is really one of the best specimens of the clergyman species I have seen; and the pleasure of having Miss Barbara Smith there for a week sketching the rocks and putting our love of them into the tan-

gible form of a picture. We are looking out now for Mr. Pigott in his brother's yacht; and his amiable face will make an agreeable variety on the sands. I thought "Walden"[1] (you mean "Life in the Woods," don't you?) a charming book, from its freshness and sincerity as well as for its bits of description. It is pleasant to think that Harriet Martineau can make so much of her last days. Her energy and her habit of useful work are admirable.

During the stay at Ilfracombe and Tenby not much literary work was done, except the articles on Young and on Riehl's book. There was a notice of Masson's Essays and the Belles Lettres section for the July number of the "Westminster," and a review for the "Leader." There is mention, too, of the reading of Beaumarchais' "Memoirs," Milne Edwards's "Zoology," Harvey's sea-side book, and "Coriolanus," and then comes this significant sentence in her Journal: —

Journal, 1856.

July 20, 1856. — The fortnight has slipped away without my being able to show much result from it. I have written a review of the "Lover's Seat," and jotted down some recollections of Ilfracombe: besides these trifles, and the introduction to an article already written, I have done no *visible* work. But I have absorbed many ideas and much bodily strength; indeed I do not remember ever feeling so strong in mind and body as I feel at this moment. On Saturday the 12th Barbara Smith arrived, and stayed here till Wednesday morning. We enjoyed her society very much, but were deeply touched to see that three years had made her so much older and sadder. Her activity for great objects is admirable; and

[1] By Thoreau.

contact with her is a fresh inspiration to work while it is day. We have now taken up Quatrefages again. The "Memoirs" of Beaumarchais yielded me little fruit. Mr. Chapman invites me to contribute to the "Westminster" for this quarter. I am anxious to begin my fiction writing, and so am not inclined to undertake an article that will give me much trouble, but at all events, I will finish my article on Young.

July 21. — We had a delightful walk on the north sands, and hunted with success. A sunny, happy day.

Glad to hear at last some news of your Essay, — hoping to hear more and better by-and-by. I did n't like to think that your labour would be thrown away, except so far as it must do good to yourself by clearing up your ideas. Not that your ideas were muddy, but the last degree of clearness can only come by writing. Mr. Pigott is with us just now, and we are meditating a nocturnal visit to St. Catherine's caves with him. Our visit to Tenby has been very useful zoologically, but we are not otherwise greatly in love with the place. It seems tame and vulgar after Ilfracombe.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 29th July, 1856.

Thank you for your kind note,[1] so like yourself. Such things encourage me, and help me to do better. I never think what I write is good for anything till other people tell me so, and even then it always seems to me as if I should never write anything *else* worth reading. Ah, how much good we may do each other by a few friendly words, and the opportunities for them are so much more frequent than for friendly

Letter to Chas. Bray, 6th Aug. 1856.

[1] About the article on Riehl's book, "The Natural History of German Life."

deeds! We want people to feel with us more than to act for us. Mr. Lewes sends his kind regards to you. He too was very pleased with your letter, for he cares more about getting approbation for me than for himself. *He* can do very well without it.

On the 8th August they left Tenby, and on 9th arrived at Richmond, "with terrible headache, but enjoyed the sense of being 'at home' again." On the 18th, "walked in Kew Park, and talked with G. of my novel. Finished 'César Birotteau' aloud." On the 25th August Mr. Lewes set off for Hofwyl, near Berne, taking his two eldest boys, Charles and Thornton, to place them at school there. He returned on 4th September, and in his absence George Eliot had been busy with her article on "Silly Novels by Lady Novelists." This was finished on the 12th September, and on the 19th she sent off the Belles Lettres section for the October number of the "Westminster."

We have now arrived at the period of the new birth, and fortunately, in the following memorandum, we have George Eliot's own words as to how it came about: —

How I came to write fiction.

September, 1856, made a new era in my life, for it was then I began to write fiction. It had always been a vague dream of mine that some time or other I might write a novel; and my shadowy conception of what the novel was to be, varied, of course, from one epoch of my life to another. But I never went further towards the actual writing of the novel than an introductory chapter describing a Staffordshire village and the life of the neighbouring farm-houses; and as the years passed on, I lost any hope that I should ever be able to write a novel, just as I desponded about everything else in my future life. I always thought I was deficient in dramatic power, both of construction and dialogue, but I

felt I should be at my ease in the descriptive parts of a novel. My "introductory chapter" was pure description, though there were good materials in it for dramatic presentation. It happened to be among the papers I had with me in Germany, and one evening at Berlin something led me to read it to George. He was struck with it as a bit of concrete description, and it suggested to him the possibility of my being able to write a novel, though he distrusted — indeed disbelieved in — my possession of any dramatic power. Still, he began to think that I might as well try some time what I could do in fiction; and by-and-by, when we came back to England, and I had greater success than he ever expected in other kinds of writing, his impression that it was worth while to see how far my mental power would go, towards the production of a novel, was strengthened. He began to say very positively, "You must try and write a story," and when we were at Tenby he urged me to begin at once. I deferred it, however, after my usual fashion, with work that does not present itself as an absolute duty. But one morning as I was thinking what should be the subject of my first story, my thoughts merged themselves into a dreamy doze, and I imagined myself writing a story, of which the title was "The Sad Fortunes of the Reverend Amos Barton." I was soon wide awake again, and told G. He said, "Oh, what a capital title!" and from that time I had settled in my mind that this should be my first story. George used to say, "It may be a failure, — it may be that you are unable to write fiction. Or perhaps it may be just good enough to warrant you trying again." Again, "You may write a *chef d'œuvre* at once, — there 's no telling." But his prevalent impression

was that though I could hardly write a *poor* novel, my effort would want the highest quality of fiction, — dramatic presentation. He used to say, "You have wit, description, and philosophy, — those go a good way towards the production of a novel. It is worth while for you to try the experiment."

We determined that if my story turned out good enough, we would send it to Blackwood; but G. thought the more probable result was that I should have to lay it aside and try again.

But when we returned to Richmond, I had to write my article on "Silly Novels," and my review of Contemporary Literature for the "Westminster," so that I did not begin my story till September 22. After I had begun it, as we were walking in the park, I mentioned to G. that I had thought of the plan of writing a series of stories, containing sketches drawn from my own observation of the clergy, and calling them "Scenes from Clerical Life," opening with "Amos Barton." He at once accepted the notion as a good one, — fresh and striking; and about a week afterwards, when I read him the first part of "Amos," he had no longer any doubt about my ability to carry out the plan. The scene at Cross Farm, he said, satisfied him that I had the very element he had been doubtful about, — it was clear I could write good dialogue. There still remained the question whether I could command any pathos; and that was to be decided by the mode in which I treated Milly's death. One night G. went to town on purpose to leave me a quiet evening for writing it. I wrote the chapter from the news brought by the shepherd to Mrs. Hackit, to the moment when Amos is dragged from the bedside, and I read it to G. when

he came home. We both cried over it, and then he came up to me and kissed me, saying, "I think your pathos is better than your fun."

The story of the "Sad Fortunes of Amos Barton" was begun on 22d September and finished on the 5th November, and I subjoin the opening correspondence between Mr. Lewes and Mr. John Blackwood, to exhibit the first effect it produced: —

Letter from G. H. Lewes to John Blackwood, 6th Nov. 1856.

"*I trouble you with a MS. of 'Sketches of Clerical Life,' which was submitted to me by a friend who desired my good offices with you. It goes by this post. I confess that before reading the MS. I had considerable doubts of my friend's powers as a writer of fiction; but after reading it, these doubts were changed into very high admiration. I don't know what you will think of the story, but according to my judgment, such humour, pathos, vivid presentation, and nice observation, have not been exhibited (in this style) since the 'Vicar of Wakefield'; and in consequence of that opinion, I feel quite pleased in negotiating the matter with you.*

"*This is what I am commissioned to say to you about the proposed series. It will consist of tales and sketches illustrative of the actual life of our country clergy about a quarter of a century ago,* — *but solely in its* human, *and not at all in its* theological *aspects; the object being to do what has never yet been done in our literature, for we have had abundant religious stories, polemical and doctrinal, but since the 'Vicar' and Miss Austen, no stories representing the clergy like every other class, with the humours, sorrows, and troubles of other men. He begged me particularly to add that* — *as the specimen sent will sufficiently prove* — *the tone throughout will be sympathetic, and not at all antagonistic.*

"*Some of these, if not all, you may think suitable for 'Maga.' If any are sent of which you do not approve, or which you do not think sufficiently interesting, these he will reserve for the separate republication, and for*

this purpose he wishes to retain the copyright. Should you only print one or two, he will be well satisfied; and still better if you should think well enough of the series to undertake the separate republication."

Letter from John Blackwood to G. H. Lewes, 12th Nov. 1856.

"I am happy to say that I think your friend's reminiscences of Clerical Life will do. If there is any more of the series written I should like to see it, as, until I saw more, I could not make any decided proposition for the publication of the Tales, in whole or in part, in the 'Magazine.' This first specimen, 'Amos Barton,' is unquestionably very pleasant reading. Perhaps the author falls into the error of trying too much to explain the characters of his actors by description instead of allowing them to evolve in the action of the story; but the descriptions are very humorous and good. The death of Milly is powerfully done, and affected me much. I am not sure whether he does not spoil it a little by specifying so minutely the different children and their names. The wind-up is perhaps the lamest part of the story; and there, too, I think the defect is caused by the specifications as to the fortunes of parties of whom the reader has no previous knowledge, and cannot, consequently, feel much interest. At first I was afraid that in the amusing reminiscences of childhood in church there was a want of some softening touch, such as the remembrance of a father or mother lends, in after years, to what was at the time a considerable penance.

"I hate anything of a sneer at real religious feeling as cordially as I despise anything like cant, and I should think this author is of the same way of thinking, although his clergymen, with one exception, are not very attractive specimens of the body. The revulsion of feeling towards poor Amos is capitally drawn, although the asinine stupidity of his conduct about the Countess had disposed one to kick him.

"I daresay I shall have a more decided opinion as to the merits of the story when I have looked at it again and thought over it; but in the meantime I am sure that there is a happy turn of expression throughout, also much

humour and pathos. If the author is a new writer, I beg to congratulate him on being worthy of the honours of print and pay. I shall be very glad to hear from you or him soon."

Letter from G. H. Lewes to John Blackwood, Saturday, Nov. 1856.

"I have communicated your letter to my clerical friend, who, though somewhat discouraged by it, has taken my advice, and will submit the second story to you when it is written. At present he has only written what he sent you. His avocations, he informs me, will prevent his setting to work for the next three weeks or so, but as soon as he is at liberty he will begin.

"I rate the story much higher than you appear to do, from certain expressions in your note, though you too appreciate the humour and pathos and the happy turn of expression. It struck me as being fresher than any story I have read for a long while, and as exhibiting, in a high degree, that faculty which I find to be the rarest of all, — viz., the dramatic ventriloquism.

"At the same time I told him that I thoroughly understood your editorial caution in not accepting from an unknown hand a series on the strength of one specimen."

Letter from John Blackwood to G. H. Lewes, 18th Nov. 1856.

"I was very far from intending that my letter should convey anything like disappointment to your friend. On the contrary, I thought the tale very good, and intended to convey as much. But I daresay I expressed myself coolly enough. Criticism would assume a much soberer tone were critics compelled seriously to act *whenever they expressed an opinion. Although not much given to hesitate about anything, I always think twice before I put the decisive mark 'In type for the Magazine' on any MS. from a stranger. Fancy the intense annoyance (to say nothing of more serious considerations) of publishing, month after month, a series about which the conviction gradually forces itself on you that you have made a total blunder.*

"I am sorry that the author has no more written, but if he cares much about a speedy appearance, I have so high an opinion of this first tale that I will waive my

objections, and publish it without seeing more, — not, of course, committing myself to go on with the other tales of the series unless I approved of them. I am very sanguine that I will approve, as, in addition to the other merits of 'Amos,' I agree with you that there is great freshness of style. If you think also that it would stimulate the author to go on with the other tales with more spirit, I will publish 'Amos' at once. He could divide into two parts. I am blocked up for December, but I could start him in January.

"*I am glad to hear that your friend is, as I supposed, a clergyman. Such a subject is best in clerical hands, and some of the pleasantest and least prejudiced correspondents I have ever had are English clergymen.*

"*I have not read 'Amos Barton' a second time, but the impression on my mind of the whole character, incidents, and feeling of the story is very distinct, which is an excellent sign.*"

"*Your letter has greatly restored the shaken confidence of my friend, who is unusually sensitive, and, unlike most writers, is more anxious about* excellence *than about appearing in print, — as his waiting so long before taking the venture proves. He is consequently afraid of failure, though not afraid of obscurity; and by failure he would understand that which I suspect most writers would be apt to consider as success, — so high is his ambition.*

Letter from G. H. Lewes, to John Blackwood, Saturday, Nov. 1856.

"*I tell you this that you may understand the sort of shy, shrinking, ambitious nature you have to deal with. I tried to persuade him that you really* did *appreciate his story, but were only hesitating about committing yourself to a series; and your last letter has proved me to have been right, — although, as he never contemplated binding you to the publication of any portion of the series to which you might object, he could not at first see your position in its true light.*

"*All is, however, clear now. He will be gratified if you publish 'Amos Barton' in January, as it will give him ample time to get the second story ready, so as to*

appear when 'Barton' is finished, should you wish it. He is anxious, however, that you should publish the general title of 'Scenes of Clerical Life'; and I think you may do this with perfect safety, since it is quite clear that the writer of 'Amos Barton' is capable of writing at least one more story suitable to 'Maga,' and two would suffice to justify the general title.

"Let me not forget to add that when I referred to 'my clerical friend,' I meant to designate the writer of the clerical stories, — not that he was a clericus. I am not at liberty to remove the veil of anonymity, even as regards social position. Be pleased, therefore, to keep the whole secret, and not even mention my *negotiation, or in any way lead guessers (should any one trouble himself with such a guess, —* not *very likely) to jump from me to my friend."*

On Christmas Day, 1856, "Mr. Gilfil's Love Story" was begun, and during December and January the following are mentioned among the books read: "The Ajax of Sophocles," Miss Martineau's "History of the Peace," Macaulay's "History" finished, Carlyle's "French Revolution," Burke's "Reflections on the French Revolution," and "Mansfield Park."

Letter from John Blackwood to the author of "Amos Barton" 29th Dec. 1856.

"Along with this I send a copy of the January number of the Magazine, in which you will find the first part of 'Amos Barton.' It gives me very great pleasure to begin the number with 'Amos,' and I put him in that position because his merits will entitle him to it, and also because it is a vital point to attract public attention to the first *part of a series, to which end being the first article of the first number of the year may contribute.*

"I have already expressed to our friend Mr. Lewes the very high opinion I entertain of 'Amos,' and the expectations I have formed of the series, should his successors prove equal to him, which I fully anticipate.

"It is a long time since I have read anything so fresh, so humorous, and so touching. The style is capital, conveying so much in so few words.

"Those who have seen the tale here are chiefly members of my own family, and they are all enthusiastic in praise.

"You may recollect that I expressed a fear that in the affecting and highly wrought scene of poor Milly's death, the attempt to individualise the children by reiterating their names weakened the effect, as the reader had not been prepared to care for them individually, but simply as a group, — the children of Milly and the sorrow-stricken curate. My brother says, 'No. Do not advise the author to touch anything so exquisite.' Of course you are the best judge.

"I now send proof of the conclusion of 'Amos,' in acknowledgment of which, and of the first part, I have the pleasure of enclosing a cheque for £52 10s., — fifty guineas.

"If the series goes on as I anticipate, there is every prospect that a republication as a separate book at some time or other will be advisable. We would look upon such republication as a joint property, and would either give you a sum for your interest in it, or publish on the terms of one half of the clear profits, to be divided between author and publisher, as might be most agreeable to you.

"I shall be very glad to hear from you, either direct or through Mr. Lewes; and any intelligence that the successors of 'Amos' are taking form and substance will be very acceptable.

"I shall let you know what the other contributors and the public think of 'Amos' as far as I can gather a verdict, but in the meantime I may congratulate you on having achieved a preliminary success at all events."

Letter from the author of "Amos Barton" to John Blackwood, Jan. 1857.

Your letter has proved to me that the generous Editor and publisher, — generous both in word and in deed, — who makes the author's path smooth and easy, is something more than a pleasant tradition. I am very sensitive to the merits of cheques for fifty guineas, but I am still more sensitive to that cordial appreciation which is a guarantee to me that my work was worth doing for its own sake.

If the "Scenes of Clerical Life" should be republished, I have no doubt we shall find it easy to arrange the terms. In the meantime the most pressing business is to make them worth republishing.

I think the particularisation of the children in the deathbed scene has an important effect on the imagination. But I have removed all names from the "conclusion" except those of Patty and Dickey, in whom, I hope, the reader has a personal interest.

I hope to send you the second story by the beginning of February. It will lie, for the most part, among quite different scenes and persons from the last, — opening in Shepperton once more, but presently moving away to a distant spot and new people, whom, I hope, you will not like less than "Amos" and his friends. But if any one of the succeeding stories should seem to you unsuitable to the pages of "Maga," it can be reserved for publication in the future volume, without creating any difficulty.

Thank you very warmly for the hearty acceptance you have given to my first story.

The first part of "Amos Barton" appeared in the January number of "Blackwood." Before the appearance of the "Magazine," on sending me the proof, Mr. John Blackwood already expressed himself with much greater warmth of admiration; and when the first part had appeared, he sent me a charming letter with a cheque for fifty guineas, and a proposal about republication of the series. When the story was concluded, he wrote me word how Albert Smith had sent him a letter saying he had never read anything that affected him more than Milly's death,

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and, added Blackwood, " The men at the club seem to have mingled their tears and their tumblers together. It will be curious if you should be a member and be hearing your own praises." There was clearly no suspicion that I was a woman. It is interesting as an indication of the value there is in such conjectural criticism generally, to remember that when G. read the first part of " Amos " to a party at Helps's, they were all sure I was a clergyman, — a Cambridge man. Blackwood seemed curious about the author, and when I signed my letter " George Eliot," hunted up some old letters from Eliot Warburton's brother to compare the handwritings, though, he said, " ' Amos ' seems to me not in the least like what that good artilleryman would write."

Letter to John Blackwood, 4th Feb. 1857.

Thank you for fulfilling your promise to let me know something of the criticisms passed on my story. I have a very moderate respect for " opinions of the press," but the private opinions of intelligent people may be valuable to me.

In reference to artistic presentation, much adverse opinion will, of course, arise from a dislike to the *order* of art rather than from a critical estimate of the execution. Any one who detests the Dutch school in general will hardly appreciate fairly the merits of a particular Dutch painting. And against this sort of condemnation one must steel one's self as one best can. But objections which point out to me any vice of manner, or any failure in producing an intended effect, will be really profitable. For example, I suppose my scientific illustrations must be a fault, since they seem to have obtruded themselves disagreeably on one of my readers. But if it be a sin to be at once a man

of science and a writer of fiction, I can declare my perfect innocence on that head, my scientific knowledge being as superficial as that of the most "practised writers." I hope to send you a second story in a few days, but I am rather behindhand this time, having been prevented from setting to work for some weeks by other business.

Whatever may be the success of my stories, I shall be resolute in preserving my *incognito*, — having observed that a *nom de plume* secures all the advantages without the disagreeables of reputation. Perhaps, therefore, it will be well to give you my prospective name, as a tub to throw to the whale in case of curious inquiries; and accordingly I subscribe myself, best and most sympathising of Editors, yours very truly,

GEORGE ELIOT.

I may mention here that my wife told me the reason she fixed on this name was that George was Mr. Lewes's Christian name, and Eliot was a good mouth-filling, easily pronounced word.

Letter to John Blackwood, 18th Feb. 1857.

First let me thank you very heartily for your letter of the 10th. Except your own very cordial appreciation which is so much beyond a mere official acceptance, that little fact about Albert Smith has gratified me more than anything else in connection with the effect of "Amos." If you should happen to hear an opinion from Thackeray, good or bad, I should like to know it.

You will see that I have availed myself of your suggestions on points of language. I quite recognise the justice of your criticisms on the French phrases. They are not in keeping with my story.

But I am unable to alter anything in relation to

the delineation or development of character, as my stories always grow out of my psychological conception of the *dramatis personæ*. For example, the behaviour of Caterina in the gallery is essential to my conception of her nature, and to the development of that nature in the plot. My artistic bent is directed not at all to the presentation of eminently irreproachable characters, but to the presentation of mixed human beings in such a way as to call forth tolerant judgment, pity, and sympathy. And I cannot stir a step aside from what I *feel* to be *true* in character. If anything strikes you as untrue to human nature in my delineations, I shall be very glad if you will point it out to me, that I may reconsider the matter. But, alas! inconsistencies and weaknesses are not untrue. I hope that your doubts about the plot will be removed by the further development of the story. Meanwhile, warmest thanks for your encouraging letters.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 24th Feb. 1857.

I am the more inclined to think that I shall admire your book, because you are suspected of having given undue preponderance to the Christian argument; for I have a growing conviction that we may measure true moral and intellectual culture by the comprehension and veneration given to all forms of thought and feeling which have influenced large masses of mankind, — and of all intolerance the intolerance calling itself philosophical is the most odious to me.

Letter to John Blackwood, 1st March, 1857.

Thank you for the copy of "Maga" and for the accompanying cheque. One has not many correspondents whose handwriting has such agreeable associations as yours.

I was particularly pleased with that extract you were so good as to send me from Mr.

Swayne's letter. Dear old "Goldie" is one of my earliest and warmest admirations, and I don't desire a better fate than to lie side by side with him in people's memories.

The Rev. Mr. Swayne had written to Blackwood saying that "Amos," in its charming tenderness, reminded him of the "Vicar of Wakefield." Blackwood had written much delighted with the two first parts of "Mr. Gilfil's Love Story," which were sent to him together.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 2d March, 1857.

I began, oddly enough you will perhaps think, by reading through the "Answers of Infidelity,"[1] those being the most interesting parts of the book to me. Some of your own passages I think very admirable,—some of them made me cry, which is always a sign of the highest pleasure writing can give me. But in many of the extracts, I think, Infidelity cuts a very poor figure. Some are feeble, some *bad*, and terribly discrepant in the tone of their thought and feeling from the passages which come fresh from your own mind. The disadvantage arising from the perpetual shifting of the point of view is a disadvantage, I suppose, inseparable from the plan, which I cannot admire or feel to be effective, though I can imagine it may be a serviceable form of presentation to some inquirers. The *execution* I do admire. I think it shows very high and rare qualities of mind, — a self-discipline and largeness of thought, which are the highest result of culture. The "Objections of Christianity," which I have also read, are excellently put, and have an immense advantage over the "Answers of Infidelity" in their greater homogeneity. The first part

[1] Baillie Prize Essay on Christianity and Infidelity: an Exposition of the Arguments on both Sides. By Miss Sara Hennell.

I have only begun and glanced through, and at present have no other observation to make than that I think you might have brought a little more artillery to bear on Christian morality. But nothing is easier than to find fault, — nothing so difficult as to *do* some real work.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 5th March, 1857.

I think I wrote very brusquely and disagreeably to you the other day, but the impertinence was altogether in the form and not at all in the feeling. I always have uncomfortable sensations after writing objections and criticisms when they relate to things I substantially admire. It is inflicting a hurt on my own veneration.

I showed the passage on the eye, p. 157, to Herbert Spencer, and he agrees with us that you have not stated your idea so as to render it a logical argument against design. You appear to imply that development and gradation in organs and functions are opposed to that conception, which they are not. I suppose you are aware that we all three hold the conception of creative design to be untenable. We only think you have not made out a good case against it.

Thank you for sending me some news of Harriet Martineau. I have often said lately "I wonder how she is."

Letter to John Blackwood, 14th March, 1857.

I am glad you retain a doubt in favour of the *dagger*, and wish I could convert you to entire approval, for I am much more satisfied when your feeling is thoroughly with me. But it would be the death of my story to substitute a dream for the real scene. Dreams usually play an important part in fiction, but rarely, I think, in actual life.

So many of us have reason to know that criminal impulses may be felt by a nature which is nevertheless guarded by its entire constitution from the commission of crime, that I can't help hoping that my Caterina will not forfeit the sympathy of all my readers.

The answer you propose to give to curious inquirers is the best possible. For several reasons I am very anxious to retain my *incognito* for some time to come, and to an author not already famous, anonymity is the highest *prestige*. Besides, if George Eliot turns out a dull dog and an ineffective writer, — a mere flash in the pan, — I, for one, am determined to cut him on the first intimation of that disagreeable fact.

The fates have willed that this shall be a very melancholy story, and I am longing to be a little merrier again.

On the 16th March, Mr. Lewes and George Eliot started for Plymouth, Penzance, and the Scilly Isles, and we have the following recollections of their stay there: —

Recollections, Scilly Isles, March-May, 1857.

I had never before seen a granite coast, and on the southern side of the island of St. Mary's one sees such a coast in its most striking and characteristic forms. Rectangular crevices, the edges of which have been rounded by weather, give many of the granite masses a resemblance to bales of wool or cotton heaped on each other; another characteristic form is the mushroom-shaped mass, often lying poised on the summits of more cubical boulders or fragments; another is the immense flat platform stretching out like a pier into the sea; another the oval basins formed by the action of the rain-

water on the summits of the rocks and boulders. The colouring of the rocks was very various and beautiful: sometimes a delicate greyish-green from the shaggy byssus which clothes it, chiefly high up from the water; then a light warm brown; then black; occasionally of a rich yellow; and here and there purplish. Below the rocks, on the coast, are almost everywhere heaps of white boulders, sometimes remarkably perfect ovals, and looking like huge eggs of some monstrous bird. Hardly any weed was to be seen on the granite, except here and there in a rock-pool, green with young ulva; and no barnacles incrust the rock, no black mussels, scarcely any limpets. The waves that beat on this coast are clear as crystal, and we used to delight in watching them rear themselves like the horses of a mighty sea-god as they approached the rocks on which they were broken into eddies of milky foam. Along a great part of this southern coast there stretch heathy or furzy downs, over which I used to enjoy rambling immensely, — there is a sense of freedom in those unenclosed grounds that one never has in a railed park, however extensive. Then, on the north side of the island, above Sandy Bar, what a view we used to get of the opposite islands and reefs, with their delicious violet and yellow tints, — the tall ship or two anchored in the Sound, changing their aspect like living things, and when the wind was at all high the white foam prancing round the reefs and rising in fountain-like curves above the screen of rocks!

Many a wet and dirty walk we had along the lanes, for the weather was often wet and almost always blustering. Now and then, however, we had a clear sky and a calm sea, and on such days

it was delicious to look up after the larks that were soaring above us, or to look out on the island- and reef-studded sea. I never enjoyed the lark before as I enjoyed it at Scilly, — never felt the full beauty of Shelley's poem on it before. A spot we became very fond of toward the close of our stay was Carne Lea, where, between two fine jutting piles of granite, there was a soft down, gay with the pretty pink flowers of the thrift, which, in this island, carpets the ground like green-sward. Here we used to sit and lie in the bright afternoons, watching the silver sunlight on the waves, — bright silver, not golden, — it is the morning and evening sunlight that is golden. A week or two after our arrival we made the acquaintance of Mr. Moyle, the surgeon, who became a delightful friend to us, always ready to help with the contents of his surgery or anything else at his command. We liked to have him come and smoke a cigar in the evening, and look in now and then for a little lesson in microscopy. The little indications of the social life at Scilly that we were able to pick up were very amusing. I was repeatedly told, in order to make me aware who Mr. Hall was, that he married a Miss Lemon. The people at St. Mary's imagine that the lawyers and doctors at Penzance are a sort of European characters that every one knows. We heard a great deal about Mr. Quill, an Irishman, the Controller of the Customs; and one day, when we were making a call on one of the residents, our host said two or three times at intervals, "I wish you knew Quill!" At last, on our farewell call, we saw the distinguished Quill, with his hair plaistered down, his charming smile, and his trousers with a broad stripe down each leg. Our host

amused us by his contempt for curs: "Oh, I would n't have a cur, — there 's nothing to look at in a cur!" [1]

Letter to Mrs. Bray, 5th April, 1857.

The smallest details written in the hastiest way that will enable me to imagine you as you are, are just what I want, — indeed, all I care about in correspondence. We are more and more in love with these little islands. There is not a tree to be seen, but there are grand granite hills on the coast such as I never saw before, and furze-covered hills with larks soaring and singing above them, and zoological wonders on the shore to fill our bottles and our souls at once. For some time I have been unusually weak and knock-upable. Our landlady is an excellent woman, but like almost all peculiarly domestic women, has not more than rudimentary ideas of cooking; and in an island where you can get nothing but beef, except by sending to Penzance, that supreme science has its maximum value. She seems to think eating a purely arbitrary procedure, — an abnormal function of mad people who come to Scilly; and if we ask her what the people live on here, is quite at a loss to tell us, apparently thinking the question relates to the abstruser portion of natural history. But I insist, and give her a culinary lecture every morning, and we do in the end get fed. Altogether our life here is so far better than the golden age, that we work as well as play. That is the happy side of things. But there is a very sad one to me which I shall not dwell upon, — only tell you of. More than a week ago I received the news that poor Chrissey had lost one of her pretty little girls of fever; that the other little one — they were the only two she had

[1] "Mill on the Floss" chap. iii., Book IV. Bob Jakin.

at home with her — was also dangerously ill, and Chrissey herself and her servant apparently attacked by typhus too. The thought of her in this state is a perpetual shadow to me in the sunshine.

I shudder at entering on such great subjects (as "Design") in letters; — my idle brain wants lashing to work like a negro, and will do nothing under a slighter stimulus. We are enjoying a retrogression to old-fashioned reading. I rush on the slightest pretext to Sophocles, and am as excited about blind old Œdipus as any young lady can be about the latest hero with magnificent eyes. But there is *one* new book we have been enjoying, and so, I hope, have you, — the "Life of Charlotte Brontë." Deeply affecting throughout: in the early part romantic, poetic as one of her own novels; in the later years tragic, — especially to those who know what sickness is. Mrs. Gaskell has done her work admirably, both in the industry and care with which she has gathered and selected her material, and in the feeling with which she has presented it. There is one exception, however, which I regret very much. She sets down Branwell's conduct entirely to remorse. Remorse may make sad work with a man; but it will not make such a life as Branwell's was in the last three or four years, unless the germs of vice had sprouted and shot up long before, as it seems clear they had in him. What a tragedy! — that picture of the old father and the three sisters trembling, day and night, in terror at the possible deeds of their drunken, brutal son and brother! That is the part of the life which affects me most.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 16th April, 1857.

I have been looking anxiously for some further

tidings of Chrissey since your last letter, which told me that she and Kate were better, though not out of danger. I try to hope that no news is good news, but if you do not think it troublesome to write, I shall be thankful to have that hope changed into certainty.

Letter to Isaac P. Evans, 16th April, 1857.

Meanwhile, to save multiplying letters, — which I know you are not fond of, — I mention now what will take no harm from being mentioned rather prematurely. I should like Chrissey to have £15 of my next half-year's income, due at the beginning of June, to spend in taking a change of air as soon as she is able to do so; and perhaps if it were desirable for her to leave before the money has been paid in, you would be so kind as to advance it for a few weeks. I am writing, of course, in ignorance of her actual state; but I should think it must be good for her, as soon as she is able to move, to leave that fever-infected place for a time, and I know the money must have gone very fast in recent expenses. I only suggest the change of air as the thing that I should think best for Chrissey; but in any case I should like her to have the money to do what she pleases with it. If she is well enough, please to give her the enclosed note, in which I have suggested to her what I have just written to you.

I am much obliged to you for your last letter, and shall be still more so if you will write me word of Chrissey's present condition.

Thank you for the pleasant notes of impressions concerning my story sent to me through Lewes.

Letter to John Blackwood, 1st May, 1857.

I will pay attention to your caution about the danger of huddling up my stories. Con-

clusions are the weak point of most authors, but some of the fault lies in the very nature of a conclusion which is at best a negation.

There must be something wrong in the winding up of "Amos," for I have heard of two persons who are disappointed with the conclusion. But the story never presented itself to me as possible to be protracted after Milly's death. The drama ends there.

I am thinking of writing a short epilogue to "Mr. Gilfil's Love-Story," and I will send it you with the proof from Jersey, where, on a strict promise that I am not to be dissected, I shall shortly join our friend Lewes.

The third story will be very different from either of the preceding, which will perhaps be an advantage, as poor Tina's sad tale was necessarily rather monotonous in its effects.

The Epilogue to "Mr. Gilfil" was written sitting on the Fortification Hill, Scilly Isles, one sunshiny morning.

It was a beautiful moment (12th May) when we came to our lodgings at Gorey. The orchards were all in blossom, — and this is an island of orchards. They cover the slopes; they stretch before you in shady, grassy, indefinite extent through every other gateway by the roadside; they flourish in some spots almost close to the sea. What a contrast to the Scilly Isles! There you stand on the hills like a sparrow on the housetop; here you are like the same sparrow when he is hopping about on the branches with green above him, green below, and green all round. Gorey stands in Granville Bay, where the grand old castle of Mont Orgueil stands and keeps guard on a fine rocky promontory overlooking the

Jersey, Recollections, 1857.

little harbour dotted with fishing craft. There is a charming piece of common, or down, where you can have the quietest, easiest walking, with a carpet of minute wild flowers that are not hindered from flourishing by the sandy rain of the coast. I delighted extremely in the brownish-green softness of this undulating common, here and there varied with a patch of bright green fern, — all the prettier for two little homesteads set down upon it, with their garden-fence and sheltering trees. It was pretty in all lights, but especially the evening light, to look round at the castle and harbour, the village and the scattered dwellings peeping out from among trees on the hill. The castle is built of stone which has a beautiful pinkish-grey tint, and the bright green ivy hangs oblique curtains on its turreted walls, making it look like a natural continuation or outgrowth of the rocky and grassy height on which it stands. Then the eye wanders on to the right and takes in the church standing halfway down the hill, which is clothed with a plantation, and shelters the little village with its cloud of blue smoke: still to the right and the village breaks off, leaving nothing but meadows in front of the slope that shuts out the setting sun, and only lets you see a hint of the golden glory that is reflected in the pink eastern clouds.

The first lovely walk we found inland was the Queen's Fern Valley, where a broad strip of meadow and pasture lies between two high slopes covered with woods and ferny wilderness. When we first saw this valley, it was in the loveliest springtime: the woods were a delicious mixture of red and tender green and purple. We have watched it losing that spring beauty and passing into the green and flowery luxuriance of June,

and now into the more monotonous summer tint of July.

When the blossoms fell away from the orchards, my next delight was to look at the grasses mingled with the red sorrel; then came the white umbelliferous plants, making a border or inner frame for them along the hedgerows and streams. Another pretty thing here is the luxuriance of the yellow iris that covers large pieces of moist ground with its broad blades. Everywhere there are tethered cows, looking at you with meek faces, — mild-eyed, sleek, fawn-coloured creatures, with delicate downy udders.

Another favourite walk of ours was round by Mont Orgueil along the coast. Here we had the green or rocky slope on one side of us, and on the other the calm sea stretching to the coast of France, visible on all but the murkiest days. But the murky days were not many during our stay, and our evening walks round the coast usually showed us a peaceful, scarcely rippled sea, plashing gently on the purple pebbles of the little scalloped bays. There were two such bays within the boundary of our sea-side walk in that direction, and one of them was a perpetual wonder to us, in the luxuriant verdure of meadows and orchards and forest-trees that sloped down to the very shore. No distressed look about the trees, as if they were ever driven harshly back by the winter winds: it was like an inland slope suddenly carried to the coast.

As for the inland walks, they are inexhaustible. The island is one labyrinth of delicious roads and lanes, leading you by the most charming nooks of houses with shady grounds and shrubberies, — delightful farm homesteads, — and trim villas.

It was a sweet, peaceful life we led here. Good creatures, the Amys, our host and hostess, with their nice boy and girl, and the little white kid, — the family pet. No disagreeable sounds to be heard in the house, no unpleasant qualities to hinder one from feeling perfect love to these simple people. We have had long rambles and long readings. But our choice of literature has been rather circumscribed in this out-of-the-way place. The "Life of George Stephenson" has been a real profit and pleasure. I have read Draper's "Physiology" aloud for grave evening hours, and such books as Currer Bell's "Professor," Mlle. d'Auny's "Mariage en Province," and Miss Ferrier's "Marriage," for lighter food. The last, however, we found ourselves unable to finish, notwithstanding Miss Ferrier's high reputation. I have been getting a smattering of botany from Miss Catlow and from Dr. Thomson's little book on wild flowers, which have created at least a longing for something more complete on the subject.

Such hedgerows in this island! Such orchards white against the green slopes and shady walks, by the woodside with distracting wild flowers. We enjoy the greenery and variety of this bushy island all the better for our stay on bare Scilly, which we had gone to and fro upon till we knew it by heart. Our little lodgings are very snug, — only 13*s.* a week, — a nice little sitting-room, with a workroom adjoining for Mr. Lewes, who is at this moment in all the bliss of having discovered a parasitic worm in a cuttlefish. We dine at five, and our afternoons are almost exhausted in rambling. I hope to get up my strength in this delicious quiet, and have fewer interruptions to work

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 22d May, 1857.

from headache than I have been having since Christmas. I wonder if I should have had the happiness of seeing Cara if I had been at Richmond now. I would rather see her than any one else in the world — except poor Chrissey. Tell me when you have read the life of Currer Bell. Some people think its revelations in bad taste, — making money out of the dead, wounding the feelings of the living, &c. What book is there that some people or other will not find abominable? We thought it admirable, cried over it, and felt the better for it. We read Cromwell's letters again at Scilly with great delight.

In May Mr. Lewes writes to Mr. John Blackwood: "We were both amused with the divination of the Manx seer and his friend Liggers." This is the first mention of the individual, whose real name was Liggins of Nuneaton, who afterwards became notorious for laying claim to the authorship of the "Scenes of Clerical Life" and "Adam Bede."

"Janet's Repentance" had been begun on the 18th April, and the first three parts were finished in Jersey. In reference to the "Scenes of Clerical Life" there are the following entries in the Journal: —

Journal, 1857.

May 2. — Received letter from Blackwood expressing his approbation of Part IX. of "Mr. Gilfil's Love-Story." He writes very pleasantly, says the series is attributed by many to Bulwer, and that Thackeray thinks highly of it. This was a pleasant fillip to me, who am just now ready to be dispirited on the slightest pretext.

May 21. — The other day we had a pleasant letter from Herbert Spencer, saying that he had heard "Mr. Gilfil's Love-Story" discussed by Baynes and Dallas, as well as previously by

Pigott, all expressing warm approval and curiosity as to the author.

May 26. — Received a pleasant letter from Blackwood, enclosing one from Archer Gurney to the author of "Mr. Gilfil's Love-Story."

I subjoin this letter, as it is the first she received in her character of a creative author, and it still bears a pencil memorandum in her writing: "This letter he brought up to me at Jersey after reading it, saying with intense joy, 'Her fame is beginning.'"

"BUCKINGHAM [BUCKS],
Thursday, 14th May, 1857.

Letter from Rev. Archer Gurney to the author of "Mr. Gilfil's Love-Story," 14th May, 1857.

"SIR, — *Will you consider it impertinent in a brother author and old reviewer to address a few lines of earnest sympathy and admiration to you, excited by the purity of your style, originality of your thoughts, and absence of all vulgar seeking for effect in those 'Scenes of Clerical Life' now appearing in 'Blackwood'? If I mistake not much, your muse of invention is no hackneyed one, and your style is too peculiar to allow of your being confounded with any of the already well-known writers of the day. Your great and characteristic charm is, to my mind, Nature. You frequently, indeed, express what I may call brilliant ideas, but they always seem to come unsought for, never, as in Lytton, for instance, to be elaborated and placed in the most advantageous light. I allude to such brief aphoristic sayings as 'Animals are such agreeable friends, they ask no questions, they pass no criticisms,' — 'All with that brisk and cheerful air which a sermon is often observed to produce when it is quite finished.' By the by, I am one of the cloth, and might take exception to certain hints, perhaps, but these are dubious. What I see plainly I admire honestly, and trust that more good remains behind. Will you always remain equally natural? That is the doubt. Will the fear of the critic or the public, or the literary world,*

which spoils almost every one, never master you? Will you always write to please yourself, and preserve the true independence which seems to mark a real supremacy of intellect? But these questions are, I fear, impertinent. I will conclude. Pardon this word of greeting from one whom you may never see or know, and believe me, your earnest admirer,

"ARCHER GURNEY.

"The Author of
'Mr. Gilfil's Love-Story.'"

June. — Blackwood writes from London that he hears nothing but approval of "Mr. Gilfil's Love-Story." Lord Stanley, among other people, had spoken to him about the "Clerical Scenes" at Bulwer's, and was astonished to find Blackwood in the dark as to the author.

Journal, 1857.

I send you by the same post with this the first part of my third story, which I hope will not disappoint you. The part is, I think, rather longer than my parts have usually been, but it would have been injurious to the effect of the story to pause earlier.

Letter to John Blackwood, 2d June, 1857.

Pleasant letters like yours are the best possible stimulus to an author's powers, and if I don't write better and better, the fault will certainly not lie in my editor, who seems to have been created in pre-established harmony with the organisation of a susceptible contributor.

This island, too, with its grassy valleys and pretty indented coast, is not at all a bad haunt for the Muses, if, as one may suppose, they have dropped their too scanty classical attire, and appear in long dresses and brown hats, like decent Christian women likely to inspire "Clerical Scenes."

Moreover, having myself a slight zoological

weakness, I am less alarmed than most people at the society of a zoological maniac. So that, altogether, your contributor is in promising circumstances, and if he doesn't behave like an animal in good condition, is clearly unworthy of his keep.

I am much gratified to have made the conquest of Professor Aytoun; but with a parent's love for the depreciated child, I can't help standing up for "Amos" as better than "Gilfil."

Lewes seems to have higher expectations from the third story than from either of the preceding, but I can form no judgment myself until I have quite finished a thing, and see it aloof from my actual self. I can only go on writing what I feel, and waiting for the proof that I have been able to make others feel.

Letter to Mrs. Bray, 5th June, 1857.

Richmond is *not* fascinating in "the season" or through the summer. It is hot, noisy, and haunted with Cockneys; but at other times we love the Park with an increasing love, and we have such a kind, good landlady there, that it always seems like going home when we return to Park Shot. She writes to us: "I hope you will make your fortune — but you must always live with me," which, considering that she gets less out of us than other lodgers, is a proof of affection in a landlady. Yes! we like our wandering life at present, and it is fructifying, and brings us material in many ways; but we keep in perspective the idea of a cottage among green fields and cows, where we mean to settle down (after we have once been to Italy), and buy pots and kettles and keep a dog. Wherever we are we work hard, — and at work which brings *present* money; for we have too many depending on us to be *dilettanti* or idlers.

I wish it to be understood that I should never invite any one to come and see me who did not ask for the invitation.

You wonder how my face has changed in the last three years. Doubtless it is older and uglier, but it ought not to have a bad expression, for I never have anything to call out my ill-humour or discontent, — which you know were always ready enough to come on slight call, — and I have everything to call out love and gratitude.

Your letter was very sweet to me. The sense of my deficiencies in the past often presses on me with a discouraging weight, and to know that any one can remember me lovingly, helps me to believe that there has been some good to balance the evil.

Letter to Mrs. John Cash (Miss Mary Sibree), 6th June, 1857.

I like to think of you as a happy wife and mother; and since Rosehill must have new tenants, I like to think that you and yours are there rather than any one else, not only because of my own confidence in your nature, but because our dear friends love you so much as a neighbour. You know I can never feel otherwise than sorry that they should not have ended their days in that pretty home; but the inevitable regret is softened as much as possible by the fact that the home has become yours.

It is very nice to hear that Mrs. Sibree can relish anything of my writing. She was always a favourite with me; and I remember very vividly many pleasant little conversations with her. Seventy-two! How happy you are to have a dear, aged mother, whose heart you can gladden!

I was a good deal touched by the letter your brother wrote to you about accepting, or rather declining, more pupils. I feel sure that his sensi-

tive nature has its peculiar trials and struggles in this strange life of ours, which some thick-skinned mortals take so easily.

I am very happy, — happy in the highest blessing life can give us, the perfect love and sympathy of a nature that stimulates my own to healthful activity. I feel too that all the terrible pain I have gone through in past years, partly from the defects of my own nature, partly from outward things, has probably been a preparation for some special work that I may do before I die. That is a blessed hope, to be rejoiced in with trembling. But even if that hope should be unfulfilled, I am contented to have lived and suffered for the sake of what has already been. You see your kind letter has made me inclined to talk about myself, but as we do not often have any communication with each other, I know it will be a gratification to your sympathetic nature to have a few direct words from me that will assure you of my moral well being.

I hope your little ones are just like you, — just as fair and sweet-tempered.

I sent off the first part of "Janet's Repentance," but to my disappointment Blackwood did not like it so well, — seemed to misunderstand the characters, and to be doubtful about the treatment of clerical matters. I wrote at once to beg him to give up printing the story if he felt uncomfortable about it, and he immediately sent a very anxious, cordial letter, saying the thought of putting a stop to the series "gave him quite a turn;" he "did not meet with George Eliots every day," and so on.

Journal, June, 1857.

I am not much surprised and not at all hurt by your letter received to-day with the proof. It is

a great satisfaction — in fact, my only satisfaction — that you should give me your judgment with perfect frankness. I am able, I think, to enter into an editor's doubts and difficulties, and to see my stories in some degree from your point of view as well as my own. My answer is written after considering the question as far as possible on all sides, and as I feel that I shall not be able to make any other than *superficial* alterations in the proof, I will, first of all, say what I can in explanation of the spirit and future course of the present story.

Letter to John Blackwood, 11th June, 1857.

The collision in the drama is not at all between "bigoted churchmanship" and evangelicalism, but between *ir*religion and religion. Religion in this case happens to be represented by evangelicalism; and the story, so far as regards the *persecution*, is a real bit in the religious history of England, that happened about eight-and-twenty years ago. I thought I had made it apparent in my sketch of Milby feelings, on the advent of Mr. Tryan, that the conflict lay between immorality and morality, — irreligion and religion. Mr. Tryan will carry the reader's sympathy. It is through him that Janet is brought to repentance. Dempster's vices have their natural evolution in deeper and deeper moral deterioration (though not without softening touches), and death from intemperance. Everything is softened from the fact, so far as art is permitted to soften and yet to remain essentially true.

My sketches, both of Churchmen and Dissenters, with whom I am almost equally acquainted, are drawn from close observation of them in real life, and not at all from hearsay or from the descriptions of novelists. If I were to undertake to alter language or character, I should be attempting to rep-

resent some vague conception of what may possibly exist in other people's minds, but has no existence in my own. Such of your marginal objections as relate to a mere detail, I can meet without difficulty by alteration; but as an artist I should be utterly powerless if I departed from my own conceptions of life and character. There is nothing to be done with the story, but either to let Dempster and Janet and the rest be as I *see* them, or to renounce it as too painful. I am keenly alive, at once to the scruples and alarms an editor may feel, and to my own utter inability to write under cramping influence, and on this double ground I should like you to consider whether it will not be better to close the series for the "Magazine" *now*. I daresay you will feel no difficulty about publishing a volume containing the story of "Janet's Repentance," and I shall accept that plan with no other feeling than that you have been to me the most liberal and agreeable of editors, and are the man of all others I would choose for a publisher.

My irony, so far as I understand myself, is not directed against opinions, — against any class of religious views, — but against the vices and weaknesses that belong to human nature in every sort of clothing. But it is possible that I may not affect other minds as I intend and wish to affect them, and you are a better judge than I can be of the degree in which I may occasionally be offensive. I should like *not* to be offensive, — I should like to touch every heart among my readers with nothing but loving humour, with tenderness, with belief in goodness. But I may have failed in this case of Janet, at least so far as to have made you feel its publication in the "Magazine" a disagreeable risk. If so, there will be no harm done by

closing the series with No. 2, as I have suggested. If, however, I take your objections to be deeper than they really are, — if you prefer inserting the story in spite of your partial dissatisfaction, I shall of course be happy to appear under "Maga's" wing still.

When I remember what have been the successes in fiction, even as republications from "Maga," I can hardly believe that the public will regard my pictures as exceptionally coarse. But in any case there are too many prolific writers who devote themselves to the production of pleasing pictures, to the exclusion of all disagreeable truths, for me to desire to add to their number. In this respect, at least, I may have some some resemblance to Thackeray, though I am not conscious of being in any way a disciple of his, unless it constitute discipleship to think him, as I suppose the majority of people with any intellect do, on the whole the most powerful of living novelists.

I feel every day a greater disinclination for theories and arguments about the origin of things in the presence of all this mystery and beauty and pain and ugliness that floods one with conflicting emotions.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 8th June, 1857.

We are reading "Aurora Leigh" for the third time with more enjoyment than ever. I know no book that gives me a deeper sense of communion with a large as well as beautiful mind. It is in process of appearing in a third edition, and no wonder.

If I live five years longer, the positive result of my existence on the side of truth and goodness will outweigh the small negative good that would have consisted in my not doing anything to shock others, and I can conceive no consequences that will make

me repent the past. Do not misunderstand me, and suppose that I think myself heroic or great in any way. Far enough from that! Faulty, miserably faulty I am, — but least of all faulty when others most blame.

*On the 24th July the pleasant sojourn at Jersey came to an end. The travellers returned to 8 Park Shot, Richmond, where Miss Sara Hennell paid them a visit at the end of the month, and Dr. and Mrs. Bodichon (*née *Miss Barbara L. Smith) came on the 4th of August. On the 12th August there is an entry in the Journal, "Finished the 'Electra' of Sophocles, and began Æschylus's 'Agamemnon,'" and then come the following letters: —*

Letter to John Blackwood, Tuesday, 17th Aug. 1857.

Lewes has just given me your letter of the 15th with the accompanying one from the Rev. W. P. Jones.

Mr. Tryan is not a portrait of any clergyman, living or dead. He is an ideal character, but I hope probable enough to resemble more than one evangelical clergyman of his day.

If Mr. Jones's deceased brother was like Mr. Tryan, so much the better, for in that case he was made of human nature's finer clay. I think you will agree with me that there are few clergymen who would be depreciated by an identification with Mr. Tryan. But I should rather suppose that the old gentleman, misled by some similarity in outward circumstances, is blind to the discrepancies which must exist where no portrait was intended. As to the rest of my story, so far as its elements were suggested by real persons, those persons have been, to use good Mr. Jones's phrase, "long in eternity."

I think I told you that a persecution of the kind I have described did actually take place, and belongs as much to the common store of our religious

history as the Gorham Controversy, or as Bishop Blomfield's decision about wax candles. But I only know the *outline* of the real persecution. The details have been filled in from my imagination. I should consider it a fault which would cause me lasting regret if I had used reality in any other than the legitimate way common to all artists, who draw their materials from their observation and experience. It would be a melancholy result of my fictions, if I gave *just* cause of annoyance to any good and sensible person. But I suppose there is no perfect safeguard against erroneous impressions or a mistaken susceptibility. We are all apt to forget how little there is about us that is unique, and how very strongly we resemble many other insignificant people who have lived before us. I should n't wonder if several nieces of pedantic maiden ladies saw a portrait of their aunt in Miss Pratt, but I hope they will not think it necessary, on that ground, to increase the already troublesome number of your correspondents.

We went to see Rosa Bonheur's picture the other day. What power! That is the way women should assert their rights. Writing is part of my religion, and I can write no word that is not prompted from within. At the same time I believe that almost all the best books in the world have been written with the hope of getting money for them.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 19th Aug. 1857.

Unless there be any strong reason to the contrary, I should like to close the series with this story. According to my calculation, which, however, may be an erroneous one, the three stories will make two good volumes, — *i. e.*, good as to bulk.

Letter to John Blackwood, 1st Sept. 1857.

I have a subject in my mind which will not come

under the limitations of the title "Clerical Life," and I am inclined to take a large canvas for it and write a novel.

In case of my writing fiction for "Maga" again, I should like to be considerably beforehand with my work, so that you can read a thoroughly decisive portion before beginning to print.

The days are very peaceful, — peacefully busy. One always feels a deeper calm as autumn comes on. I should be satisfied to look forward to a heaven made up of long autumn afternoon walks, quite delivered from any necessity of giving a judgment on the woman question, or of reading newspapers about Indian mutinies. I am so glad there are thousands of good people in the world who have very decided opinions, and are fond of working hard to enforce them. I like to feel and think everything and do nothing, a pool of the "deep contemplative" kind.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 21st Sept. 1857.

Some people *do* prosper, — that is a comfort. The rest of us must fall back on the beatitudes, — "Blessed are the poor," — that is Luke's version, you know, and it is really, on the whole, more comforting than Matthew's. I 'm afraid there are few of us who can appropriate the blessings of the "poor in spirit."

We are reading one of the most wonderful books in French or any other literature, — Monteil's "Histoire des Français des divers États," — a history written on an original plan. If you see any account of it, read that account.

I am very much gratified that my Janet has won your heart and kept up your interest in her to the end.

Letter to John Blackwood, Saturday, 17th Oct. 1857.

My new story haunts me a good deal, and I shall set about it without delay. It will be

a country story, — full of the breath of cows and the scent of hay. But I shall not ask you to look at it till I have written a volume or more, and then you will be able to judge whether you will prefer printing it in the " Magazine," or publishing it as a separate novel when it is completed.

By the way, the sheets of the " Clerical Scenes " are not come, but I shall not want to make any other than verbal and literal corrections, so that it will hardly be necessary for me to go through the sheets *and* the proofs, which I must, of course, see.

I enclose a titlepage with a motto. But if you don't like the motto I give it up. I 've not set my heart on it.

I leave the number of copies to be published, and the style of getting up, entirely to your discretion. As to the terms, I wish to retain the copyright, according to the stipulation made for me by Lewes when he sent " Amos Barton; " and whatever you can afford to give me for the first edition, I shall prefer having as a definite payment rather than as half profits.

You stated, in a letter about "Amos Barton," your willingness to accede to either plan, so I have no hesitation in expressing my wishes.

" Open to conviction," indeed! I should think so. I am open to conviction on all points except dinner and debts. I hold that the one must be eaten and the other paid. These are my only prejudices.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 20th Oct. 1857.

I *was* pleased with Mr. Call.[1] He is a man one

[1] Mr. W. M. W. Call, author of "Reverberations and other Poems," who married Mr. Charles Hennell's widow,—formerly Miss Brabant. As will be seen from the subsequent correspondence, Mr. and Mrs. Call remained amongst the Leweses' warm friends to the end, and Mr. Call is the author of an interesting paper on George Eliot in the "Westminster Review" of July, 1881.

really cares to talk to, — has thoughts, says what he means, and listens to what others say. We should quite like to see him often. And I cannot tell you how much I have felt Mrs. Call's graceful as well as kind behaviour to me. Some months ago, before the new edition of the "Biographical History of Philosophy" came out, Mr. Lewes had a letter from a working-man at Leicester, I think, who said that he and some fellow students met together, on a Sunday, to read the book aloud and discuss it. He had marked some errors of the press, and sent them to Mr. Lewes for his new edition. Was n't that pretty?

"Conscience goes to the hammering in of nails" is my gospel. There can be no harm in preaching *that* to women at any rate. But I should be sorry to undertake any more specific enunciation of doctrine on a question so entangled as the "woman question." The part of the Epicurean gods is always an easy one; but because I prefer it so strongly myself, I the more highly venerate those who are struggling in the thick of the contest. "La carrière ouverte aux talens," whether the talents be feminine or masculine, I am quite confident is a right maxim. Whether "La carrière ouverte à la sottise" be equally just when made equally universal, it would be too much like "taking sides" for me to say.

Letter to the Brays, 30th Oct. 1857.

There are only three entries in the journal for October.

Oct. 9. — Finished "Janet's Repentance." I had meant to carry on the series, and especially I longed to tell the story of the "Clerical Tutor," but my annoyance at Blackwood's want of sympathy in the first part (although he came

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round to admiration at the third part) determined me to close the series and republish them in two volumes.

Oct. 22. — Began my new novel "Adam Bede."

Oct. 29. — Received a letter from Blackwood offering me £120 for the first edition of "Scenes of Clerical Life."

Letter to John Blackwood, 30th Oct. 1857.

I am quite contented with the sum (£120) you offer me for the edition, being thoroughly confident of your disposition to do the best you can for me. I perceive your hope of success for the "Scenes" is not strong, and you certainly have excellent means of knowing the probabilities in such a case.

I am not aware that the motto has been used before; but if you suspect it, we had better leave it out altogether. A stale motto would hardly be an ornament to the titlepage.

Letter to Mrs. Bray, 1st Nov. 1857.

How I wish I could get to you by some magic, and have one walk over the hill with you again! Letters are poor things compared with five minutes of looking and speaking, and one kiss. Nevertheless, I do like to have a little letter now and then, though I don't for a moment ask it if you have no spontaneous impulse to give it. I can't help losing belief that people love me, — the unbelief is in my nature, and no sort of fork will drive it finally out. I can't help wondering that you can think of *me* in the past with much pleasure. It all seems so painful to me, — made up of blunders and selfishness, — and it only comes back upon me as a thing to be forgiven. That is honest painful truth, and not sentimentality. But I am thankful if others found more good than I am able to remember.

It is pleasant to have the first sheet of one's

proof, — to see one's paragraphs released from the tight-lacing of double columns, and expanding themselves at their ease.

Letter to John Blackwood, 7th Nov. 1857.

I perceive clearly the desirableness of the short number, — for my observation of literary affairs has gone far enough to convince me that neither critical judgment nor practical experience can guarantee any opinion as to rapidity of sale, in the case of an unknown author; and I shudder at the prospect of encumbering my publishers' bookshelves.

My new story is in progress, — slow progress at present. A little sunshine of success would stimulate its growth, I daresay. Unhappily, I am as impressionable as I am obstinate, and as much in need of sympathy from my readers as I am incapable of bending myself to their tastes. But if I can only find a public as cordial and agreeable in its treatment of me as my editor, I shall have nothing to wish. Even my thin skin will be comfortable then. The page is not a shabby one, after all; but I fear the fact of two volumes instead of three is a fatal feature in my style in the eyes of librarians.

One is glad to have one's book (*apropos* of review of Lewes's " History of Philosophy ") spoken well of by papers of good circulation,

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 9th Nov. 1857.

because it is possible, though not certain, that such praise may help the sale; but otherwise it is hardly worth while to trouble one's self about newspaper reviews, unless they point out some error, or present that very rare phenomenon, a true appreciation, which is the most delicious form in which sympathy can reach one. So much sectarian feeling usually arises in discussions on the subject of phrenology, that I confess the associations of the word are not agreeable to me. The

last refuge of intolerance is in not tolerating the intolerant; and I am often in danger of secreting that sort of venom.

It is pleasant to have a kind word now and then, when one is not near enough to have a kind glance or a hearty shake by the hand. It is an old weakness of mine to have no faith in affection that does not express itself; and when friends take no notice of me for a long while, I generally settle down into the belief that they have become indifferent or have begun to dislike me. That is not the best mental constitution; but it might be worse, — for I don't feel obliged to dislike *them* in consequence. I, for one, ought not to complain if people think worse of me than I deserve, for I have very often reason to be ashamed of my thoughts about others. They almost always turn out to be better than I expected, — fuller of kindness towards me at least. In the fundamental doctrine of your book ("The Philosophy of Necessity"), — that mind presents itself under the same conditions of invariableness of antecedent and consequent as all other phenomena (the only difference being that the true antecedent and consequent are proportionately difficult to discover as the phenomena are more complex), — I think you know that I agree. And every one who knows what science means must also agree with you that there can be no social science without the admission of that doctrine. I dislike extremely a passage in which you appear to consider the disregard of individuals as a lofty condition of mind. My own experience and development deepen every day my conviction that our moral progress may be measured by the degree in which we sympathise with individual suffering and

Letter to Charles Bray, 15th Nov. 1857.

individual joy. The fact that in the scheme of things we see a constant and tremendous sacrifice of individuals is, it seems to me, only one of the many proofs that urge upon us our total inability to find in our own natures a key to the Divine mystery. I could more readily turn Christian, and worship Jesus again, than embrace a Theism which professes to explain the proceedings of God. But I don't feel at all wise in these matters. I have a few strong impressions which serve me for my own support and guidance, but do not in the least qualify me to speak as a theorist.

Mr. Lewes sends you his kind remembrances, and will not like you any the worse for cutting him up. He has had to perform that office for his own friends sometimes. I suppose phrenology is an open question, on which everybody has a right to speak his mind. Mr. Lewes, feeling the importance of the subject, desired to give it its due place in his "History of Philosophy," and doing so, he must, of course, say what *he* believes to be the truth, not what other people believe to be the truth. If you will show where he is mistaken, you will be doing him a service as well as phrenology. His arguments may be bad; but I will answer for him that he has not been guilty of any intentional unfairness. With regard to their system, phrenologists seem to me to be animated by the same sort of spirit as that of religious dogmatists, and especially in this, — that in proportion as a man approximates to their opinions without identifying himself with them, they think him offensive and contemptible. It is amusing to read from the opposite side complaints against Mr. Lewes for giving too high a position to phrenology, and a confident opinion that "phrenologists, by their

ridiculous pretensions, merit all the contempt that has been thrown on them." Thus doctors differ! But I am much less interested in crusades for or against phrenology than in your happiness at Ivy Cottage.[1] Happiness means all sorts of love and good feeling; and that is the best result that can ever come out of science. Do you know Buckle's "History of Civilisation"? I think you would find it a suggestive book.

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 24th Nov. 1857.

Anniversaries are sad things, — to one who has lived long and done little. Herbert Spencer dined with us the other day, — looks well, and is brimful of clever talk as usual. His volume of "Essays" is to come out soon. He is just now on a crusade against the notion of "species." We are reading Harriet Martineau's history with edification, and otherwise feeding our souls, which flourish very well, notwithstanding November weather.

Journal, 1857.

Nov. 28. — A glorious day, still autumnal and not wintry. We have had a delicious walk in the Park, and I think the colouring of the scenery is more beautiful than ever. Many of the oaks are still thickly covered with leaves of a rich yellow-brown; the elms, golden sometimes, still with lingering patches of green. On our way to the Park the view from Richmond Hill had a delicate blue mist over it, that seemed to hang like a veil before the sober brownish-yellow of the distant elms. As we came home, the sun was setting on a fog-bank, and we saw him sink into that purple ocean, — the orange and gold passing into green above the fog-bank, the gold and orange reflected in the river in more sombre tints. The other day, as we were coming home

[1] The Brays' new house at Coventry.

through the Park, after having walked under a sombre, heavily clouded sky, the western sun shone out from under the curtain, and lit up the trees and grass, thrown into relief on a background of dark-purple cloud. Then, as we advanced towards the Richmond end of the Park, the level reddening rays shone on the dry fern and the distant oaks, and threw a crimson light on them. I have especially enjoyed this autumn, the delicious greenness of the turf, in contrast with the red and yellow of the dying leaves.

Dec. 6 (*Sunday*). — Finished the "Agamemnon" to-day. In the evenings of late we have been reading Harriet Martineau's "Sketch of the British Empire in India," and are now following it up with Macaulay's articles on Clive and Hastings. We have lately read Harriet Martineau's Introduction to the "History of the Peace."

Dec. 8. — I am reading "Die Familie," by Riehl, forming the third volume of the series, the two first of which, "Land und Volk," and "Die Bürgerliche Gesellschaft," I reviewed for the "Westminster."

A letter from Blackwood to-day tells us that Major Blackwood, during his brother's absence in England, having some reasons, not specified, for being more hopeful about the "Clerical Scenes," resolved to publish 1000 instead of 750; and in consequence of this, Blackwood promises to pay me an additional £60 when 750 shall have been sold off. He reports that an elderly clergyman has written to him to say that "Janet's Repentance" is exquisite, — another vote to register along with that of Mrs. Nutt's rector, who "cried over the story like a child."

Dec. 10. — Major Blackwood called, — an unaffected, agreeable man. It was evident to us, when he had only been in the room a few minutes, that he knew I was George Eliot.

Lewes has read to me your last kind letter, and I am not insensible to the "practical cheerer" it contains. But I rejoice with trembling at the additional 250, lest you should have to repent of them.

Letter to John Blackwood, 11th Dec. 1857

I have certainly had a good deal of encouragement to believe that there are many minds, both of the more cultured sort and of the common novel-reading class, likely to be touched by my stories; but the word "many" is very elastic, and often shrinks frightfully when measured by a financial standard.

When one remembers how long it was before Charles Lamb's Essays were known familiarly to any but the elect few, the very strongest assurance of merit or originality — supposing one so happy as to have that assurance — could hardly do more than give the hope of *ultimate* recognition.

Our affairs are very prosperous just now, making sunshine in a shady or rather a foggy place. It is a great happiness to me that Mr. Lewes gets more and more of the recognition he deserves; pleasant letters and speeches have been very numerous lately, especially about his "Sea-side Studies" which have appeared in "Blackwood," and are soon to appear — very much improved and enlarged — in a separate volume. Dear Carlyle writes, *apropos* of his "Frederic": "I have had such a fourteen months as was never appointed me before in this world, — sorrow, darkness, and disgust my daily compan-

Letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 13th Dec. 1857.

ions; and no outlook visible, except getting a detestable business turned off, or else being driven mad by it." That is his exaggerated way of speaking; and writing is always painful to him. Do you know he is sixty-two! I fear this will be his last book. Tell Mr. Bray I am reading a book of Riehl's, "The Family," forming the sequel to his other volumes. He will be pleased to hear that so good a writer agrees with him on several points about the occupations of women. The book is a good one; and if I were in the way of writing articles, I should write one on it. There is so much to read, and the days are so short! I get more hungry for knowledge every day, and less able to satisfy my hunger. Time is like the Sibylline leaves, getting more precious the less there remains of it. That, I believe, is the correct allusion for a fine writer to make on the occasion.

Letter to John Blackwood, 15th Dec. 1857.

I give up the motto, because it struck you as having been used before; and though I copied it into my note-book when I was re-reading "Amelia" a few months ago, it is one of those obvious quotations which never *appear* fresh, though they may actually be be made for the first time.

I shall be curious to know the result of the subscription.

There are a few persons to whom I should like a copy of the volume to be sent, and I enclose a list of them.

Journal, 1857.

Dec. 17. — Read my new story to G. this evening as far as the end of the third chapter. He praised it highly. I have finished "Die Familie," by Riehl, — a delightful book. I am in the "Choephoræ" now. In the evenings we are reading "History of the Thirty Years'

Peace" and Béranger. Thoroughly disappointed in Béranger.

Dec. 19 (*Saturday*). — Alone this evening with very thankful, solemn thoughts, — feeling the great and unhoped-for blessings that have been given me in life. This last year, especially, has been marked by inward progress and outward advantages. In the spring George's "History of Philosophy" appeared in the new edition; his "Sea-side Studies" have been written with much enjoyment, and met with much admiration, and now they are on the verge of being published with bright prospects. Blackwood has also accepted his "Physiology of Common Life;" the "Goethe" has passed into its third German edition; and best of all, G.'s head is well. I have written the "Scenes of Clerical Life," — my first book; and though we are uncertain still whether it will be a success as a separate publication, I have had much sympathy from my readers in "Blackwood," and feel a deep satisfaction in having done a bit of faithful work that will perhaps remain like a primrose root in the hedgerow, and gladden and chasten human hearts in years to come.

Buckle's is a book full of suggestive material, though there are some strangely unphilosophic opinions mixed with its hardy philosophy. For example, he holds that there is no such thing as *race* or *hereditary transmission* of qualities! (I should tell you, at the same time, that he is a necessitarian and a physiological-psychologist). It is only by such negations as these that he can find his way to the position which he maintains at great length, — that the progress of mankind is dependent entirely on the progress of knowledge, and that there has been no

Letter to the Brays, 23d Dec. 1857.

intrinsically moral advance. However, he presents that side of the subject which has perhaps been least adequately dwelt on.

Dec. 25. — (*Christmas Day*). — George and I spent this lovely day together, — lovely as a clear spring day. We could see Hampstead from the Park so distinctly that it seemed to have suddenly come nearer to us. We ate our turkey together in a happy *solitude à deux.*

Journal, 1857.

Dec. 31 (*the last night of* 1857). — The dear old year is gone, with all its *Weben* and *Streben.* Yet not gone either: for what I have suffered and enjoyed in it remains to me an everlasting possession while my soul's life remains. This time last year I was alone, as I am now, and dear George was at Vernon Hill. I was writing the introduction to "Mr. Gilfil's Love-Story." What a world of thoughts and feelings since then! My life has deepened unspeakably during the last year: I feel a greater capacity for moral and intellectual enjoyment; a more acute sense of my deficiencies in the past; a more solemn desire to be faithful to coming duties than I remember at any former period of my life. And my happiness has deepened too: the blessedness of a perfect love and union grows daily. I have had some severe suffering this year from anxiety about my sister, and what will probably be a final separation from her, — there has been no other real trouble. Few women, I fear, have had such reason as I have to think the long sad years of youth were worth living for the sake of middle age. Our prospects are very bright too. I am writing my new novel. G. is full of his "Physiology of Common Life." He has just finished editing Johnston, for which he is to have

100 guineas, and we have both encouragement to think that our books just coming out, "Sea-side Studies" and "Scenes of Clerical Life," will be well received. So good-bye, dear 1857! May I be able to look back on 1858 with an equal consciousness of advancement in work *and in heart!*

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER VII

MARCH, 1855, TO DECEMBER, 1857

Return to England — Dover — Bayswater — East Sheen — Books read — Articles written — Letters to Miss Hennell — "Life of Goethe" — Froude's article on Spinoza — Article writing — "Cumming" — 8 Park Shot, Richmond — Letter to Charles Bray — Effect of article on Cumming — Letter to Miss Hennell — Reading on Physiology — Article on Heine — Review for "Leader," &c. — Books read — Visit to Mrs. Clarke at Attleboro — Sale of "Life of Goethe" — "Shaving of Shagpat" — Spinoza's "Ethics," translation finished — The "Saturday Review" — Ruskin — Alison — Harriet Martineau — Women's earnings — Articles and reviews — Wishes not to be known as translator of the "Ethics" — Article on Young begun — Visit to Ilfracombe — Description — Zoophyte hunting — Finished articles on Young and Riehl — Naturalistic experience — Delightful walks — Rev. Mr. Tugwell — Devonshire lanes and springs — Tendency to scientific accuracy — Sunsets — Cocklewomen at Swansea — Letters to Miss Hennell and Mrs. Peter Taylor — Tenby — Zoology — Thoreau's "Walden" — Feeling strong in mind and body — Barbara Leigh Smith comes to Tenby — George Eliot anxious to begin her fiction writing — Mr. E. F. S. Pigott — Return to Richmond — Mr. Lewes takes his boys to Hofwyl — George Eliot writes article on "Silly Novels by Lady Novelists" — "How I came to write fiction" — Correspondence between Mr. Lewes and Mr. John Blackwood about MS. of "Amos Barton" — "Mr. Gilfil's Love-Story" begun — Books read — Letter from John Blackwood to the author of "Amos Barton," sending copy of the January, 1857, number of the Magazine and fifty guineas — Reply — Blackwood's admiration — Albert Smith's appreciation — Letters to Blackwood — Name of George Eliot assumed — Dutch school in art — Artistic bent — Letter to Miss Hennell — Intolerance — Letter to John Blackwood on Mr. Swayne comparing writing to Goldsmith's — Letter to Miss Hennell on essay, "Christianity and Infidelity" — Letter to Blackwood — Caterina and the dagger scene — Trip to Penzance and the Scilly Isles — Description of St. Mary's — Mr. Moyle, the surgeon — Social life — Letter to Mrs. Bray — Anxiety about sister — Letter to Miss Sara Hennell — "Life of Charlotte Brontë" — Letter to Isaac P. Evans — Mrs. Clarke's illness — Letter to Blackwood — Conclusions of stories — Jersey — Description of Gorey — Delightful walks — Reading Draper's "Physiology" — Miss Catlow and Dr. Thomson on wild flowers — "Life of George Stephenson" — Letter to Miss Hennell — Life in Jersey — Liggins appears on the scene — "Janet's Repentance" — Series attributed to Bulwer — Thackeray thinks highly of it — Letter from Herbert Spencer about "Mr. Gilfil" — Letter from Archer Gurney — Lord Stanley thinks highly of the "Scenes" — Letter to Blackwood, with first part of "Janet's Repentance" — Letter to Mrs. Bray — Richmond — Expression of face — Letter to Mrs. John Cash — Happiness in her life and hope in her work — Chilled by Blackwood's want of enthusiasm about "Janet" — Letter to John Blackwood on "Janet" — Letter to Miss Sara Hennell

— "Aurora Leigh" — Return to Richmond — Letter to John Blackwood on "Janet" — Letters to Miss Hennell — Rosa Bonheur — Thought, not action — Mr. and Mrs. Call — Letter to John Blackwood — Haunted by new story — Letter to Charles Bray — The "Woman Question" — Close of "Clerical Scenes" series — "Adam Bede" begun — Receives £120 for first edition of "Scenes of Clerical Life" — Letter to Mrs. Bray — Unbelief in people's love — Letter to John Blackwood — Sheets of "Clerical Scenes" — Letter to Miss Hennell — Newspaper criticism — Letter to Charles Bray — "The Philosophy of Necessity" — Sympathy with individuals — Objection to Theism — Phrenology — Happiness the best result that can ever come out of science — Letters to Miss Hennell — Reading Riehl's "The Family" — Hunger for knowledge — Buckle's "History of Civilisation" — Autumn days at Richmond — Reading the "Agamemnon" — Harriet Martineau's "Sketch of the British Empire in India" — Macaulay's essays on Clive and Hastings — Major Blackwood calls, and suspects identity of George Eliot — Reading the "Choephoræ" — "History of the Thirty Years' Peace," and Béranger — Thankfulness in reviewing experience of 1857.

APPENDIX

AS this volume is going through the press, I have to thank Mrs. John Cash of Coventry for the following valuable additional information in regard to the important subject of Miss Evans's change of religious belief in 1841–42, and for her further general recollections of the Coventry period of George Eliot's life: —

I was sixteen years of age in 1841; and, as I have already stated, my first remembrance of Miss Evans is of her call on my father and mother, with their friend and neighbour Mrs. Pears, when in conversation she gave expression to her great appreciation of the writings of Isaac Taylor. The controversy raised by the "Tracts for the Times," which gave occasion for the publication of Mr. Taylor's "Ancient Christianity," being now remote, I give the following extract from a footnote in Trench's "Notes on the Parables," to show the influence such a work as Mr. Taylor's would be likely to exercise on the mind of one who esteemed its author; and also the feeling it excited against an eminently religious man, by revelations which he desired and believed would serve the cause of New Testament Christianity. The note is on the "Tares." The quotation, containing the reference, is from Menken.

"Many so-called Church historians (*authors of 'Ancient Christianity' and the like*), ignorant of the purpose and of the hidden glory of the Church, have their pleasure in the Tares, and imagine

themselves wonderfully wise and useful when out of Church history (which ought to be the history of the Light and the Truth) they have made a shameful history of error and wickedness."

It was upon her first or second interview with my mother that Miss Evans told her how shocked she had been by the apparent union of religious feeling with a low sense of morality among the people in the district she visited, who were mostly Methodists. She gave as an instance the case of a woman, who, when a falsehood was clearly brought home to her by her visitors, said, "She did not feel that she had grieved the Spirit much." Now those readers of the letters to Miss Lewis who are acquainted with modern Evangelicalism, even in its "after-glow," especially as it was presented to the world by Church of England teaching and practice, will recognise its characteristics in the moral scrupulousness, the sense of obligation on the part of Christians to avoid the very appearance of evil, the practical piety which those letters reveal.

Mrs. Evans (Miss Lewis tells me) was a very serious, earnest-minded woman, anxiously concerned for the moral and religious training of her children; glad to place them under the care of such persons as the Misses Franklin, to whose school a mother of a different order objected, on the ground that "it was where that saint Mary Ann Evans had been."

It is natural, then, that, early awed by and attracted towards beliefs cherished by the best persons she had known, and advocated in the best books she had read, the mind of Miss Evans should have been stirred by exhibitions of a *theoretic* severance of religion from morality, whether pre-

sented among the disciples of "Ancient Christianity" or by the subjects of its modern revivals: it is probable that she may thereby have been led, as others have been, to a reconsideration of the creeds of Christendom, and to further inquiry concerning their origin.

On the same grounds it is likely that the presentation of social virtues, apart from evangelical motives, would impress her; and I have authority for stating that to the inquiry of a friend in after years, as to what influence she attributed the first unsettlement of her orthodox views, she quickly made answer: "Oh, Walter Scott's." Now I well remember her speaking to me of Robert Hall's confession that he had been made unhappy for a week by the reading of Miss Edgeworth's Tales, in which useful, good, and pleasant lives are lived with no reference to religious hopes and fears; and her drawing my attention to the real greatness of mind and sincerity of faith which this candid confession betokened. Such remarks, I think, throw light upon the *way* in which her own evangelical belief had been affected by works in which its dogmas are not enforced as necessary springs of virtuous action.

I give these scattered reminiscences, in evidence of the half-unconscious preparation (of which Mr. Cross speaks), for a change which was, in my judgment, more gradual in its development, as well as deeper in its character, than might be inferred from the record of its abrupt following upon Miss Evans's introduction to Mr. Hennell's "Inquiry concerning the Origin of Christianity."

The evening's discussion with my father, to which I have referred in my previous communica-

tion in the "Life," is now vividly present to my mind. There was not only on her part a vehemence of tone, startling in one so quiet, but a crudeness in her objections, an absence of proposed solution of difficulties, which partly distressed and partly pleased me (siding as I did mentally with my father), and which was in strange contrast to the satisfied calm which marked her subsequent treatment of religious differences.

Upon my father's using an argument (common enough in those days) drawn from the present condition of the Jews as a fulfilment of prophecy, and saying, "If I were tempted to doubt the truth of the Bible, I should only have to look at a Jew to confirm my faith in it," "Don't talk to me of the Jews!" Miss Evans retorted, in an irritated tone; "to think that they were deluded into expectations of a temporal deliverer, and then punished because they could n't understand that it was a spiritual deliverer that was intended!" To something that followed from her, intimating the claim of creatures upon their Creator, my father objected, "But we have no claim upon God." "No claim upon God!" she reiterated indignantly; "we have the strongest possible claim upon Him."

I regret that I can recall nothing more of a conversation carried on for more than two hours; but I vividly remember how deeply Miss Evans was moved, and how, as she stood against the mantelpiece during the last part of the time, her delicate fingers, in which she held a small piece of muslin on which she was at work, trembled with her agitation.

The impression allowed to remain upon the minds of her friends, for some time after she had made declaration of her heresies, was of her being

in a troubled, unsettled state. So great were her simplicity and candour in acknowledging this, and so apparent was her earnest desire for truth, that no hesitation was felt in asking her to receive visits from persons of different persuasions, who were judged competent to bring forward the best arguments in favour of orthodox doctrines. One of these was a Baptist minister, introduced to her by Miss Franklin: he was said to be well read in divinity, and I remember him as an original and interesting preacher. After an interview with Miss Evans, meeting my father, he said: "That young lady must have had the devil at her elbow to suggest her doubts, for there was not a book that I recommended to her in support of Christian evidences that she had not read."

Mr. Watts, one of the professors at Spring Hill College (Independent), Birmingham, a colleague of Mr. Henry Rogers, author of the "Eclipse of Faith," and who had himself studied at the Hallé University, and enjoyed the friendship of Dr. Tholück, was requested (I think by my mother) to call on Miss Evans. His acquaintance with German Rationalism (rare in England in those days) qualified him to enter into, and it was hoped to meet, difficulties raised by a critical study of the New Testament. After his first or second interview, my brother remembers his observing with emphasis, "*She* has gone into the question;" and I can recall a reference made by him at a later date in my hearing to Miss Evans's discontent with her own solutions, — or rather with her own standpoint at that time. This discontent he said "was so far satisfactory." Doubtless it gave him hope of the reconversion of one who had, as he told my mother, awakened deep interest in his own mind,

as much by the earnestness which characterised her inquiries as by her exceptional attainments.

From letters that passed between my brother and myself during his residence in Germany, I give the following extracts referring to this period.

The first is from one of mine, dated September 2, 1842.

"In my father's absence we (my mother and I) called on Miss Evans. She now takes up a different position. Her views are not altogether altered, but she says it would be extreme arrogance in so young a person to suppose she had obtained *yet* any just ideas of truth. She had been reading Dr. Tholück's reply to Strauss's 'Life of Jesus,' but said Mr. Watts had advised her *not* to read his 'Guido and Julius.'"

In answer to this my brother says, in a letter dated, Hallé, September 26, 1842: "You have given, doubtless, a very accurate account of Miss Evans's mode of stating her present sentiments. Mr. Watts's reason for advising that Dr. Tholück's 'Guido and Julius' be not read is, perhaps, that the reasoning is not satisfactory."

In another letter, addressed to my brother at Hallé, and dated October 28, 1842, I tell him: "Last week mother and I spent an evening with Miss Evans. She seems more settled in her views than ever, and rests her objections to Christianity on this ground, that Calvinism is Christianity, and, this granted, that it is a religion based on pure selfishness. She occupied, however, a great part of the time in pleading for works of imagination, maintaining that they perform an office for the mind which nothing else can. On the mention of Shakspeare, she praised him with her characteristic ardour, was shocked at the idea that mother

should disapprove the perusal of his writings, and quite distressed lest, through her influence, I should be prevented from reading them. She could be content were she allowed no other book than Shakspeare; and in educating a child, this would be the first book she would place in its hands.

" She seems to have read a great deal of Italian literature, and speaks with rapture of Metastasio's novels. She has lent me ' Le mie Prigioni ' di Silvio Pellico, in his own tongue, as a book to begin with. She says there is a prevailing but very mistaken idea that Italian is an easy language, though she is exceedingly delighted with it. If at any time I wish to begin German, she would very much like to give me some instruction."

In addition to the above relating to Shakspeare, I recall the protest that my mother's objection to his plays (my mother *had* been an ardent lover of " the play "), on the ground that there were things in them that offended her, was as reasonable as the objection to walk in a beautiful garden, " because toads and weeds are to be found in it."

In a letter dated March 6, 1843, I write to my brother: " Your request that you may be informed as to the precise nature of Miss Evans's philosophical views, I shall find it very difficult to comply with, inasmuch as on our last interview she did not express herself so fully on this subject as formerly; indeed I believe she is not now so desirous of controversy. She however appeared, to me at least, to have rather changed her ground on some points. For instance, she said she considered Jesus Christ as the embodiment of perfect love, and seemed to be leaning slightly to the doctrines of Carlyle and Emerson when she remarked that she considered the Bible a revelation in a certain sense,

as she considered herself a revelation of the mind of Deity, &c. She was very anxious to know if you had heard Schelling."

In a letter addressed to my brother at Spring Hill College, and dated October 28, 1844, I find this reference to Dr. Harris, who had been preaching a charity sermon in a chapel at Foleshill.

"Miss Evans has just been reproaching me for not informing her of Dr. Harris's preaching, which she would have given anything to hear, as she says his 'Great Teacher' left more delightful impressions on her mind than anything she ever read, and is, she thinks, the best book that could be written by a man holding his principles."

In the same letter I mention a second lesson in German given me by Miss Evans. In one written some time before, I tell my brother of her kind proposal, but add that my parents object "on account of her dangerous sentiments." She had, however, since called at our house one morning to renew it; and I well remember how eagerly I watched my mother, looking so affectionately at Miss Evans, and saying quietly, "You know, with your superior intellect, I cannot help fearing you might influence Mary, though you might not intend to do so. But," she went on to say, "her father does not agree with me: he does not see any danger, and thinks we ought not to refuse, as it is so very kind of you to be willing to take the trouble, — and we know it would be a great advantage to her to learn German; for she will probably have to earn her living by teaching." Seeing at a glance how matters stood, Miss Evans turned round quickly to me, and said, "Come on Saturday at three o'clock, and bring what books you have."

So I went, and began "Don Carlos," continuing

to go, with some intervals occasioned by absence, pretty regularly on Saturday afternoons, for nearly two years; but it was not until the end of the second year, when I received Miss Evans's suggestion that the lessons were no longer necessary and should be discontinued, that I fully realised what this companionship had been to me. The loss was like the loss of sunshine.

No promise had been given that my religious belief should be undisturbed, nor was any needed. Interest was turned aside from Calvinism and Arminianism, which at an early age had engaged my attention, towards manifestations of nobility of character, and sympathy with human struggles and sufferings under varied conditions. The character of the "Marquis von Posa" (in "Don Carlos") roused an enthusiasm for heroism and virtue, which it was delightful to express to one who so fully shared it. Placing together one day the works of Schiller, which were in two or three volumes, Miss Evans said, "Oh, if *I* had given these to the world, how happy I should be!"

It must have been to confirm myself in my traditional faith by confession of it, that I once took upon myself to say to her how sure I was that there could be no true morality without evangelical belief. "Oh, it is so, is it?" she said, with the kindest smile, and nothing further passed. From time to time, however, her reverence and affection for the character of Christ and the Apostle Paul, and her sympathy with genuine religious feeling, were very clear to me. Expressing one day her horror of a crowd, she said, "I never would press through one, unless it were to see a second Jesus." The words startled me, — the conception of Jesus Christ in my mind being so little associated with

a human form; but they impressed me with a certain reality of feeling which I contrasted, as I did Miss Evans's abiding interest in great principles, with the somewhat factitious and occasional as well as fitful affection and concern manifest in many whom I looked up to as " converted " people.

Once only do I remember such contrast being made by herself. She attended the service at the opening of a new church at Foleshill with her father, and remarked to me the next day, that looking at the gaily dressed people, she could not help thinking how much easier life would be to her, and how much better she should stand in the estimation of her neighbours, if only she could take things as they did, be satisfied with outside pleasures, and conform to the popular beliefs without any reflection or examination. Once, too, after being in the company of educated persons " professing and calling themselves Christians," she commented to me on the *tone* of conversation, often frivolous, sometimes ill-natured, that seemed yet to excite in no one any sense of impropriety.

It must have been in those early days that she spoke to me of a visit from one of her uncles in Derbyshire, a Wesleyan, and how much she had enjoyed talking with him, finding she could enter into his feelings so much better than she had done in past times, when her views seemed more in accordance with his own, but were really less so.

Amongst other books, I remember the " Life of Dr. Arnold " interested her deeply. Speaking of it to me one morning, she referred to a conversation she had had with a friend the evening before, and said they had agreed that it was a great good for such men to remain within the pale of ortho-

doxy, that so they might draw from the old doctrines the best that was to be got from them.

Of criticisms on German books read with Miss Evans, I recall one or two. In the "Robbers," she criticised the attempt to enhance the horror of the situation of the abandoned father, by details of physical wretchedness, as a mistake in Art. "Wallenstein" she ranked higher from an intellectual point of view than any other work of Schiller's. The talk of the soldiers in the "Lager" she pointed out to me as "just what it would be." On my faint response, "I suppose it is!" she returned, "No, you do not *suppose*, — we *know* these things;' and then gave me a specimen of what might be a navvy's talk, — "The sort of thing such people say is, 'I 'll break off your arm, and bloody your face with the stump.'"

Mrs. Bray tells the following incident, as showing her quick perception of excellence from a new and unknown source. "We were sitting," Mrs. Bray says, "one summer afternoon on the lawn at Rosehill, July, 1850, when Marian came running to us from the house with the 'Leader' newspaper in her hand. 'Here is a new poet come into the world!' she exclaimed, and sitting down with us she read from the 'Leader' the poem called 'Hymn' signed M., and ending with the fine stanza, —

> 'When I have passed a nobler life in sorrow;
> Have seen rude masses grow to fulgent spheres;
> Seen how To-day is father of To-morrow,
> And how the Ages justify the Years,
> I praise Thee, God.'

"The 'Hymn' is now reprinted in Mr. W. M. W. Call's volume of collected poems, called 'Golden Histories.'"

Kingsley's "Saint's Tragedy" was not so pop-

ular as his other works, but Miss Evans was deeply moved by it. Putting it into my hands one morning, she said, "There, read it, — *you* will care for it."

The Life of "Jean Paul Richter," published in the Catholic Series (in which the head of Christ, by De la Roche, so dear to her, figures as a vignette), was read and talked of with great interest, as was his "Flower, Fruit, and Thorn Pieces," translated by the late Mr. Edward Noel of Hampstead. Choice little bits of humour from the latter she greatly enjoyed.

Margaret Fuller's "Woman in the Nineteenth Century," I think Miss Evans gave to me. I know it interested her, as did "Emerson's Essays." On his visit to Coventry, we could not, unfortunately, accept Mr. Bray's kind invitation to meet him at Rosehill; but after he had left, Miss Evans soon came up kindly to give us her impressions of him while they were fresh in her memory. She told us he had asked her what had first awakened her to deep reflection, and when she answered, "Rousseau's Confessions," he remarked that this was very interesting, inasmuch as Carlyle had told him that very book had had the same effect upon his mind. As *I* heard Emerson's remark after his interviews with Miss Evans, it was, "That young lady has a calm, clear spirit." Intercourse, it will be seen, was kept up with my family, otherwise than through the lessons, by calls, and in little gatherings of friends in evenings, when we were favoured to hear Miss Evans sing. Her voice was not strong, and I think she preferred playing on the piano; but her low notes were effective, and there was always an elevation in the rendering.

As I knew Miss Evans, no one escaped her

notice. In her treatment of servants, for instance, she was most considerate. "They come to me," she used to say, "with all their troubles," as indeed did her friends generally, — sometimes, she would confess, to an extent that quite oppressed her. When any object of charity came under her notice, and power to help was within her reach, she was very prompt in rendering it. Our servant's brother or sister, or both of them, died, leaving children dependent on friends themselves poor. Miss Evans at once offered to provide clothing and school-fees for one of these, a chubby-faced little girl four or five years of age. Unexpectedly, however, an aunt at a distance proposed to adopt the child. I recollect taking her to say good-bye to her would-be benefactress, and can see her now standing still and subdued in her black frock and cape, with Miss Evans kneeling down by her, and saying, after giving her some money, "Then I suppose there is nothing else we can do for her."

My husband's mother, who was a member of the Society of Friends, established, with the help of her daughters and a few others interested, an Industrial Home for girls about the age of fourteen. It was in the year 1843, and was, therefore, one of the first institutions of the kind in England. The model was taken from something of the same order attempted by a young girl in France. The girls were, as far as practicable, to maintain themselves, working under conditions of comfort and protection more attainable than in their own homes. The idea was new; the Home could not be started without funds, and my mother undertook to collect for it in her own neighbourhood. In a letter to me, written at this time, she tells me she is "not doing much to help dear Mrs. Cash," there being

"a prejudice against the scheme;" but adds, "This morning Miss Evans called, and brought me two guineas from her father." I tell of this, as one among many indications of Miss Evans's ever-growing zeal to serve humanity in a broader way, motived as *she* felt by a higher aim than what she termed "desire to save one's soul by making up coarse flannel for the poor."

In these broad views — in this desire to bring her less advantaged neighbours nearer to her own level, to meet them on common ground, to raise them above the liability to eleemosynary charity — she had Mr. Bray's full sympathy. To me she dwelt frequently upon his genuine benevolence, upon his ways of advancing the interests of the working-men, as being in her judgment wise and good. She visited periodically, in turn with Mrs. Bray, myself, and a few others, an infant-school which Mr. Bray had helped to start; and although this sort of work was so little suited to her, yet so much did she feel the duty of living for others, especially the less privileged, that one morning she came to Mrs. Bray, expressing strongly her desire to help in *any* work that could be given her. The only thing that could be thought of was the illustration of some lessons in Natural History, on sheets of cardboard, needed then when prints of the kind were not to be procured for schools. The class of animals to be illustrated by Mrs. Bray on the sheet taken by Miss Evans was the "Rodentiæ," and at the top a squirrel was to figure, the which she undertook to draw. This I have seen, half finished, — a witness to the willing mind; proof that its proper work lay otherwhere. Lectures at the Mechanics' Institute were matters of great interest to Miss Evans; and I remember the

pleasure given her by the performance of the music of "Comus," with lecture by Professor Taylor, at our old St. Mary's Hall. In that hall, too, we heard the first lecture on total abstinence that I remember to have heard in Coventry, though of "Temperance Societies" we knew something. The lecturer was the Rev. Mr. Spencer, a clergyman at Hinton Charterhouse, near Bath, and uncle of Mr. Herbert Spencer. Miss Evans was present at the lecture, with Mr. Bray, who told me afterwards he had some difficulty in restraining her from going up, as soon as the lecture was over, to take the pledge, he thought without due consideration. "I felt," she said, speaking to me afterwards of the lecturer, "that he had got hold of a power for good that was of incalculable worth."

I need scarcely say that I received, along with lessons in German, some "rules and lessons for life" from Miss Evans. One of the first was an injunction to be accurate, — enforced with the warning that the tendency is to grow less and less so as we get older. The other was, tolerance. How well I can remember the remonstrance, "My dear child, the great lesson of life is tolerance." In the proverb, "Live and let live," she saw a principle involved, harder to act upon, she would say, than the maxims of benevolence, — I think, because bringing less credit with it.

The reading of dramas and romances naturally gives rise to discussion of their main theme. In treating of love and marriage, Miss Evans's feeling was so fine as to satisfy a young girl in her teens, with her impossible ideals. The conception of the union of two persons by so close a tie as marriage, without a previous union of minds as well as hearts, was to her dreadful. "How terrible it

must be," she once said to me, "to find one's self tied to a being whose limitations you could see, and must know were such as to prevent your ever being understood!" She thought that though in England marriages were not professedly "arrangés," they were so too often practically: young people being brought together, and receiving intimations that mutual interest was desired and expected, were apt to drift into connections on grounds not strong enough for the wear and tear of life; and this, too, among the middle as well as in the higher classes. After speaking of these and other facts, of how things were and would be, in spite of likelihood to the contrary, she would end by saying playfully, "Now remember I tell you this, and I am sixty!"

She thought the stringency of laws rendering the marriage-tie (at that date) irrevocable, practically worked injuriously; the effect being "that many wives took far less pains to please their husbands in behaviour and appearance, because they knew their own position to be invulnerable." And at a later time she spoke of marriages on the Continent, where separations did not necessarily involve discredit, as being very frequently far happier.

One claim, as she regarded it, from equals to each other, was this, the right to hear from the aggrieved, "You have ill-treated me; do you not see your conduct is not fair, looked at from my side?" Such frankness would, she said, bring about good understanding better than reticent endurance. Her own filial piety was sufficiently manifest; but of the converse obligation, that of the claim of child upon parent, she was wont to speak thus strongly. "There may be," she would

say, " conduct on the part of a parent which should exonerate his child from further obligation to him; but there cannot be action conceivable which should absolve the parent from obligation to serve his child, seeing that for that child's existence he is himself responsible." I did not at the time see the connection between this view and the change of a fundamental nature marked by Miss Evans's earlier contention for our " claim on God." The bearing of the above on orthodox religion I did not see. Some time ago, however, I came across this reflection, made by a clergyman of the Broad Church school, — that since the *claims* of children had, in the plea for schools, been based on the responsibility of parents towards them, a higher principle had been maintained on the platform than was preached from the pulpit, as the basis of the popular theology.

In my previous communication in the " Life," I have already made mention of Miss Evans's sympathy with me in my own religious difficulties; and my obligations to her were deepened by her seconding my resolve to acknowledge how much of the traditional belief had fallen away from me, and left a simpler faith. In this I found her best help when, as time passed on, my brother saw he could not conscientiously continue in the calling he had chosen. As, however, his heresies were not considered fatal, and he was esteemed by the professors and students of his college, there was for some time hesitation. In this predicament I wrote to him a little favouring compromise. My mother also wrote. I took the letters to Miss Evans before posting them. She read mine first, with no remark, and then began my mother's, reading until she came upon these words: " In the meantime let me

entreat you not to utter any sentiments, either in the pulpit or in conversation, that you do not believe to be strictly true;" on which she said, turning to me, "Look, this is the important point, what your mother says here," and I immediately put my own letter into the fire. "What are you doing?" she quickly said; and when I answered, "You are right, — my mother's letter is to the point, and that only need go," she nodded assent, and, keeping it, sent it enclosed with a few lines from herself.

I knew what I had done, and so did she: the giving up of the ministry to a young man without other resources was no light matter, and as I rose to go, she said, "These are the tragedies for which the world cares so little, but which are so much to me."

More than twenty years elapsed before I had again the privilege of seeing George Eliot, and that on one occasion only, after her final settlement in London. It touched me deeply to find how much she had retained of her kind interest in all that concerned me and mine, and I remarked on this to Mr. Lewes, who came to the door with my daughter and myself at parting. "Wonderful sympathy," I said. "Is it not?" said he; and when I added, inquiringly, "The power lies there?" "Unquestionably it does," was his answer; "she forgets nothing that has ever come within the curl of her eyelash: above all, she forgets no one who has ever spoken to her one kind word."

END OF VOL. I GEORGE ELIOT'S LIFE

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